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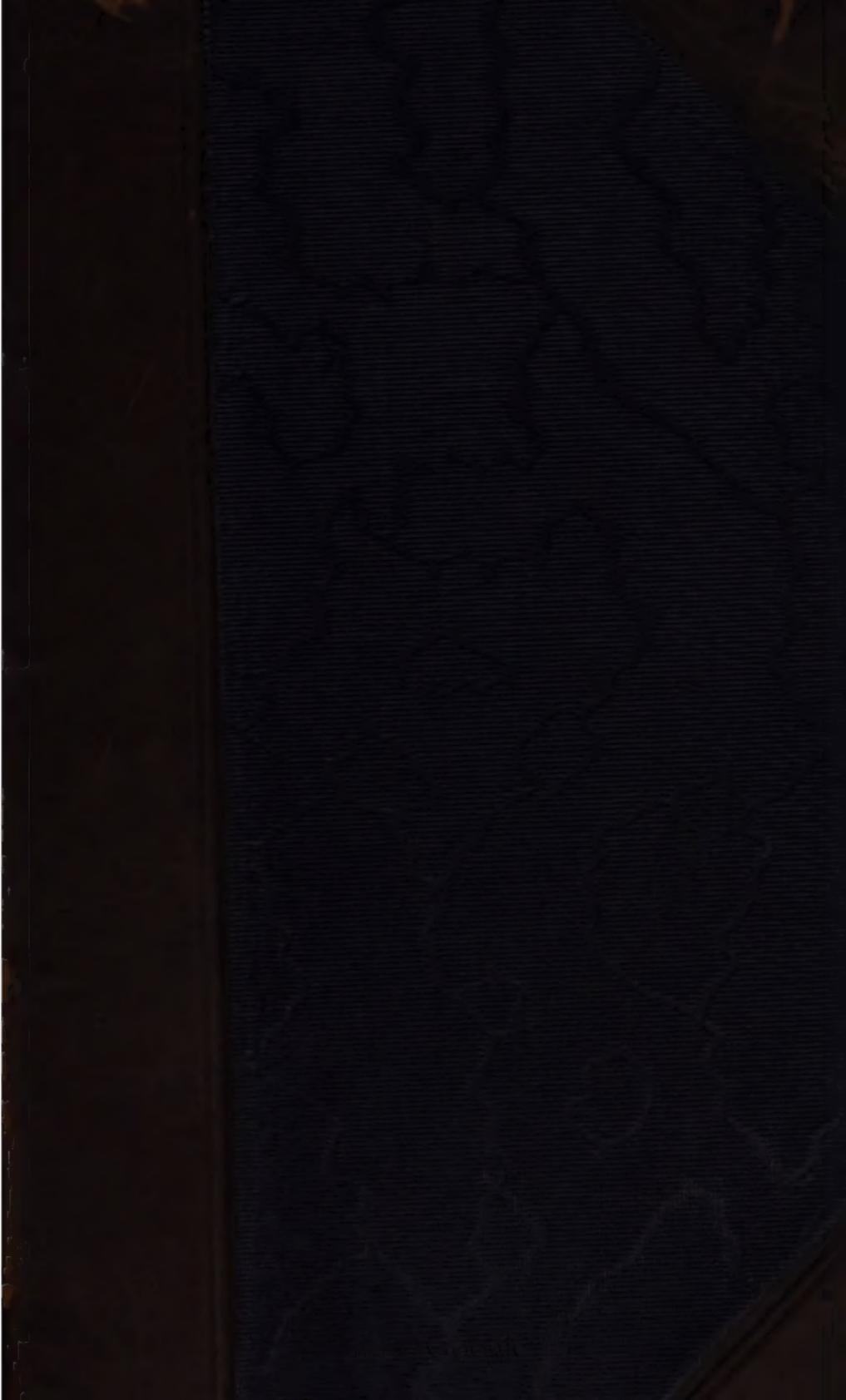
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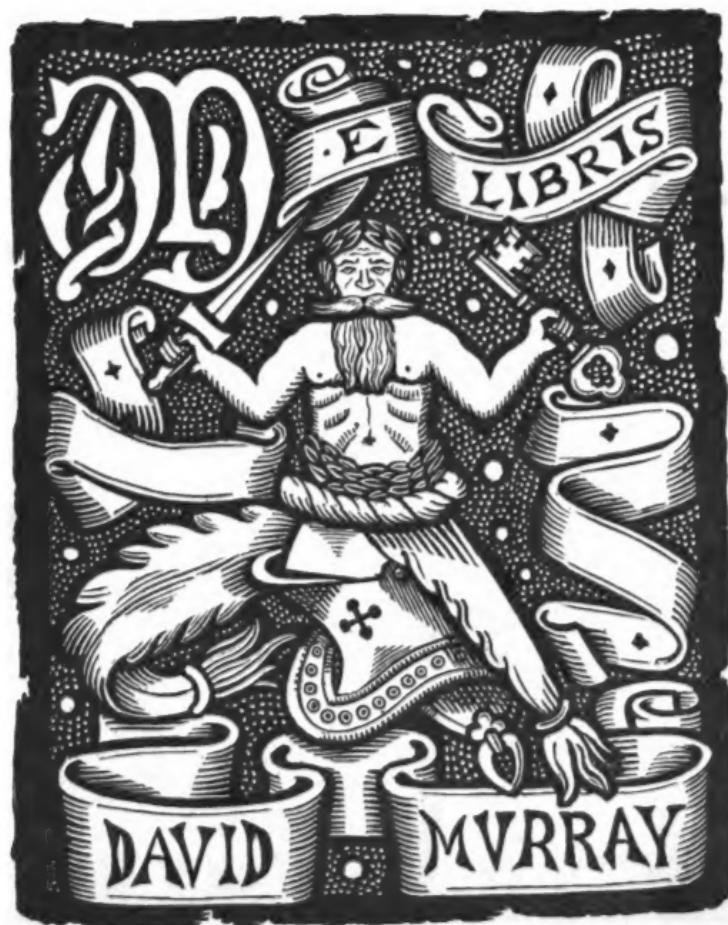
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BO.
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62

first published in 1804

Anna Maria Astell was wife of
Captain Maxwell of Boddam.

She wrote a number of songs and
some poems.

See Brown, Paisley Poets T/357

Mr. Maxwell died at Mertonworth
Cottage, Paisley, on 25th June 1845, aged
52.



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David Murray
Glasgow.

LETTERS

FROM

THE DEAD TO THE LIVING;

AND

MORAL LETTERS.

BY

ANN MARIA MAXWELL,

(FORMERLY AINSLIE.)

Printed for the Author

Tell us, ye dead ; will none of you, in pity
To those you left behind, disclose the secret ?
Oh, that some courteous ghost would blab it out,
What 'tis you are, and we must shortly be.

Hair's Grave.

A NEW EDITION.

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1820.



PREFACE.

PERHAPS I may be accused of presumption, by laying the following Letters before the Public, on a subject which has long since been so ably treated by that excellent and pious lady, Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe: I trust, however, the assertion that I do so, not pretending to vie with that celebrated genius, but from a desire to contribute my feeble attempts to promote the cause of religion and virtue, will plead my excuse. Under that impression, I venture to submit the following pages to my readers. I have endeavoured to convey some faint idea of the happiness which the spirits of the just enjoy after death, and the misery of those who perish in sin.

To those who may consider the gravity of

the subject singular for the choice of a young female, I would observe, that, instead of stamping a sullen gloom on the mind, Religion in reality inspires cheerfulness and serenity. The man who is possessed of a truly religious disposition, is not disturbed or dismayed by the fear of death; it is only to the unqualified pretender to piety, that he appears so terrific.

In the Moral Letters, I have attempted to arrest the attention of my own sex in particular, not by way of information, but to call to their remembrance some points frequently overlooked, though of the utmost consequence; and did I know that the serious reflections they contain, the importance of the subject, or the morals they are intended to inculcate, would in any degree operate on the minds of my readers as an incentive to piety, my feeble efforts would be fully recompensed, and my purpose accomplished.

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LETTERS

FROM

THE DEAD TO THE LIVING.

LETTER I.

FROM PHILANDER, IN THE CELESTIAL REGIONS, TO JULIA,
HIS ONCE INTENDED SPOUSE ON EARTH.

IN the regions of eternal bliss, of never-ending joy, thy remembrance, Julia, steals on me, as in the happy hours, when, rich in mutual love, we knew no dearer hope than the contemplation of our approaching union. Yes, Julia, even in heaven my thoughts revert to thee; I anticipate the time when we shall be re-united to part no more. Here alone thine unobtrusive virtues, thy patient suffering, shall meet their due reward. Here, envy and malice find no place; here, piety and resignation rest in their destined home.

B

Dost thou remember, Julia, that day we thought so happy, when, sanctioned by thy parents, I sought thee in the grove? I found thee seated beneath a spreading tree; the branches formed a friendly shade from the rays of the meridian sun: thy golden locks glittered in his beams, and thine eyes of liquid blue were raised contemplative to the wide extended firmament. A tear hung on thy cheek;—a volume of Milton was in thy hand, on which thou hadst shed a tribute to the once nobler state of man. At my approach a smile played on thy lips, and in winning accents you delivered your sentiments on the interesting subject. Often had I admired thy comprehensive powers, and felt the force of thine understanding. That auspicious day my soul seemed rapt in bliss, while it hung on thy honied accents, as with sweet enthusiasm you pourtrayed the height from whence our primeval parents were expelled by disobedience to the Eternal, and dwelt on the more blissful state

to which those were called, who, on earth fulfilled the divine decrees, and performed their vocation with humble faith. The seductive strains of the poet raised our thoughts to Heaven, and sublimed every sentiment: at length I informed thee of the application I had made to thy parents, and with trembling hope entreated thy consent. Blushing in sweet confusion thy timid eye met mine,—that glance was sufficient, —thousands of words would not have expressed so much;—I received the silent assurance and was happy.—We traced our path through the new-mown field; thy respected parents met us, we knelt before them and received their blessing. The wished-for day arrived, it was ushered in with joy; the sky was unclouded, all nature seemed gay as if to hail our nuptial morn. Suddenly a langour stole over me, and obscured my faculties; I fainted, and on recovering found myself laid on a couch; you were kneeling before me, bathed in tears, and pale as the parian

marble. I would have risen, but my strength was unequal to the effort. Three days I suffered, nor could thy affectionate care ward off the dart of death : I felt its foreboding, but feared it not ; to the virtuous, death appears only in the bright semblance of an angel. But I grieved for thee, Julia ; I mourned thy blasted hopes, thy already altered form. Thy parents called me their son, —they wept, and seemed to anticipate also the loss of their daughter.

Two hours before my spirit was released from its earthly tenement, my senses seemed absorbed in stupor ; but what sensations did I then enjoy. A foretaste of bliss was presented to me :—Heavenly radiance seemed to encircle the bed, and celestial music cheered my parting agony. The last convulsive throe recalled me for a moment to the world, and faltering the name of Julia, I expired.—What a scene then burst on my wondering sight ! Myriads of beings, more glorious than the sun, hailed my new-born state. Ce-

lestial music broke on my ear, in sounds ravishing even to immortals. Those glorious inhabitants of Heaven, in songs of joy greeted my release from the earth. Light and aerial I mounted on the wings of the wind ; a tumult of joy pervaded every sense : the angels bore me to the throne, where was seated the Majesty of Heaven ; I fell down and worshipped, penetrated with gratitude and delight ! Here, Julia, description has no powers ; in language yet unknown to you, could I only describe the glorious, (and to mortals) mysterious Trinity. The souls of many of my departed friends hailed my arrival ; in particular, the companion of my youth from infancy, my much lamented Erasmus ; I instantly recognised him, though the dazzling lustre of his beauty surprized and delighted me.

A hitherto unknown melody was communicated to my voice ; I joined the angelic choir in hymns of praise to the Creator and Giver of our happiness.— Oh, Julia ! feebly would I

pourtray the joys of Heaven ! every sense is gratified, every feeling lapt in bliss ! The beauty and glory of the celestial world surpass the most brilliant idea you can form ! Suppose it entirely composed of the purest gold and the most precious stones, still you will be far from conceiving the glory of Heaven. It does not consist of such as these, but a thousand and a thousand times more precious and beautiful !

Prepare, my Julia, prepare for this world of joy. I am permitted to give thee warning of thine approaching dissolution. The innocence of thy life disrobes the tyrant of his terrors ; before three moons pass away, thou wilt be with me. Start not at the prospect of the tomb ;— it is but a receptacle for the viler part, in which it will repose till the great and awful day, when the grave shall yield up its dead ; then the spirit, re-united to its fondly beloved companion, will imbibe from the immortal radiance of the Redeemer,—a resemblance to his own celestial pu-

rity and beauty. I will entreat permission from the Almighty to welcome thee to this abode of bliss; my happiness can receive no other addition. Then inseparable in time and to eternity, together we will offer up our praises and thanksgivings before the throne of grace. Till that happy period arrive, farewell, my Julia ! Soon shall we meet again to part no more.

LETTER II.

TO LORD ——— FROM HIS DECEASED FRIEND.

At length 'tis past, the sand of life is run, and freed from mortal toils and cares, I dwell with the blessed in heaven. Permitted by the Most High, I now address the friend whom on earth I loved the most; so true it is that death extinguisheth not affection, and that friendship and love acquire new vigour in the presence of Him from whom they flow.

We have often, in the hours of friendly converse, talked of a future state, but how confined and grovelling were our ideas, how trifling all our suppositions! Mortal man never conceived, nor could the brightest Seraph describe, even in his heavenly language, the wonders, the glory of heaven! The height, the extent of the bliss

we enjoy, vast, boundless as eternity itself. Here every desire is fulfilled, every wish accomplished; sorrow never enters these blessed habitations, but seraphic peace and unmixed felicity dwell in every breast.

You, my Lord, were with me in my last moments; you beheld the anguish and terror of my soul, just standing on the awful verge of eternity, and ready to take the fatal plunge, uncertain what was her approaching fate; looking back with fond regret on those smiling scenes about to close for ever! How many fond recollections and endearing ties twined about my heart! A circle of weeping friends surrounded me; my tender wife, dearer to me than existence, seemed the image of unutterable woe; had paradise in all its pomp opened to my view, these objects would have detained me on earth. At length the film was removed from my mental sight, and, surprised at the infatuation which had enchain'd my senses, my soul panted to be

free. When the last pangs of expiring nature agonized every limb, the vision of futurity, bright, dazzling, glorious, refreshed the fainting spirit. I beheld the bed of death surrounded with angels who beckoned me away, and when the last feeble struggle unloosed my fetters, oh ! how unutterable was my transport ! What happiness called me to the skies ;—what glory surrounded me ! Looking back on those who mourned over my cold remains, O my loved relatives, I cried, could you now behold my felicity ! one little moment since, I struggled with death, now I am equal to the angels.—Can it be ? but an instant has elapsed, since I was feeble, helpless, and suffering; I dwelt in darkness and sorrow, now the realms of endless light receive me. O how puerile and insignificant seem now all earthly occupations and cares ! How can such trivial objects interest an immortal spirit, though clothed with the clay ? O happy day of my release, while the terrestrial globe remains, where I received my existence,

and the seasons perform their course, each year
will I solemnize thee !

Swifter than the wind we mounted the æthereal height ; we passed thousands of worlds similar to that I had just left, and blazing suns which lightened the vast expanse. With the rapidity of thought, we traversed the boundless æther, and stood before the presence of Infinite Goodness. Penetrated with awe, I adored the Omnipotent. Conscious that so lately I was an impure and sinful being, I trembled before the Highest, when a voice,—such as the softest harmony never equalled, a voice that at once dispelled every doubt, and infused heavenly peace and joy, issuing from the silver clouds that surrounded the throne, pronounced my pardon and acceptance. It was the voice of the blessed Jesus ! When I ventured to raise mine eyes to His radiant countenance, blooming in immortal uncreated beauty, and beaming with ineffable love, O how exquisite, how transporting were my sensations !

But what language can describe the affection of separate spirits towards Him who purchased their salvation with his blood; who to deliver them from endless woe, clothed Himself with mortality, and expired in torture and ignominy ? It is not such love as that of children to a parent, for they know it not ; it is not the love of brethren, for they feel it not ; it is not the affection of lovers, for that is grovelling and impure. It is a sentiment which pervades the soul, a pure and holy flame, that burns with unabated vigour, and fills it with exquisite, ravishing delight. But why do I attempt to describe what no mortal being can comprehend, so different is every thought and sentiment from those of men ? How ignorant are the inhabitants of the earth, how confined all their conceptions and most enlightened ideas ! Could a mortal behold the glory of Heaven, and live, he would say, that the most enlightened sages your world ever produced, were more ignorant than children ; for even the souls of

new-born babes, in one hour acquire more knowledge, than was ever given to the wisest and oldest among men. What was formerly incomprehensible and inscrutable, appears now clear and easily understood. The mysteries of the Holy Trinity, and the existence of an all-powerful Being—who had no beginning, are now revealed to me; but no words to be found on earth, can instruct you in those sacred truths; the language of heaven can alone reveal them. In our sight, your world is but as a grain of sand on the sea shore, of little note in the grand scale of the universe; but the eye of Omnipotence beholds with complacency the meanest object in the immensity of space. I have visited all the planetary worlds, many of which are so far removed from your system, that no learned researches will ever discover them. I have beheld all the wonders of the creation, but all are insignificant compared to the heaven where dwelleth the Most High !

I have seen the great and wise men of all ages, whose lives have entitled them to the rewards of piety and virtue. What was my delight at first beholding the venerable patriarchs recorded in holy writ ! I have seen our primeval parents, who, holy and innocent, came from the creating hand of the Most High; confirmed in purity and established in felicity, they feel no more the heart-rending pangs of remorse, for the fatal consequences their crime entailed on their descendants; but, as parental love often induces them to visit the earth, they behold with sorrow, (which even happy spirits can feel towards those who are dear to them,) the vices and consequent misery of their posterity, and with a feeling of self-reproach and regret, return to their destined home, where every pensive thought is forgotten, and care can never dwell.

I dare say from the faint description which I have been able to give, you long for the period of emancipation, that you may become a partaker

of the felicity to be found only here. Your release is not very far distant ; two short years will yet pass away before you leave the dark and cheerless planet that now sustains you. Examine then your heart, for pure must be the soul, that would dwell in the presence of perfect purity ; and though the world calls you good and virtuous, there are many errors to be atoned for, many faults to be corrected, ere you can enjoy the bliss of immortals. The Omnipotent seeth not as man seeth; the inmost thoughts of the heart are known to Him. Prepare then to appear before His awful tribunal, that when death approaches, he may find you armed with the shield of righteousness, ready to obey the summons with faith and resignation.

LETTER III.

TO A LADY FROM HER DECEASED SISTER.

Be not dismayed, my ever dearest Evelina, the friend and companion of all my earthly hopes and enjoyments, the soother and consoler of my afflictions while on earth. Thy lessons, imprinted on my heart, and enforced by thy pious example, ennobled my sentiments, and fitted me for the society of heaven. I have been an unseen witness of thy grief for my early fate; be comforted, my beloved sister, in the assurance that I am happy beyond all that mortal imagination can form; my bliss is secured beyond the possibility of a change. Reflect, that had my care-worn frame survived a few years longer, a sorrowful monotony of days, weeks, and months, was all that remained to my view. My

fondest hopes destroyed, as the tender blossom is blasted by the north wind; a prey to an incurable melancholy, the sport of bitter recollections, to my anxious friends, even to you, my Evelina, I would have become an insupportable burden. Join then with me, in thanking the Supreme Disposer of events, that he hath called me from affliction to endless felicity—from mourning and regret, to the fulness of bliss. Here sorrow is remembered no longer, and memory ceases to agonize; all is light, life, and joy, nor in this world of bliss has grief power to wound.

You well remember the cause of my swift decay; to you every sentiment of my heart was laid open. When our lamented parents were summoned from the earth, they committed me to your affectionate care, and joining our hands, exhorted us to employ our lives in the advancement of each other's happiness. When they were laid in the grave we were inconsolable;

my constitution, always delicate, had well nigh yielded to the shock : then exerting yourself to conquer your own feelings, you enabled me to overcome the acute pangs of remembrance. Though only five years my senior, you supplied to me the place of both parents, and instilled into my heart, lessons of religion and virtue, which, taking deep root, finally insured me a reception into the mansions of the just.

We became tranquil and happy, we wished for nothing more than the certainty of spending our lives together,—our wish was fulfilled. When you plighted your vows to the chosen of your heart, I became an inmate with you, and continued to enjoy the same matchless affection which had hitherto been the delight and solace of my life.—Our felicity was too supreme for the lot of mortals ; had it continued, we had probably forgotten the beneficent hand that bestowed it : Heaven, therefore, in its infinite mercy, saw the danger and removed the snare.

Horatio had been our companion from childhood ; he assisted me in my studies, and in the absence of my tutor frequently supplied his place as my instructor. You know the result ; an attachment, pure and lasting as it was ardent, united our hearts, and bound them with the strongest ties of love. Ere scarce I knew the meaning of the words, Horatio called me his wife, and I delighted on bestowing on him the title of husband : you beheld our mutual affection and approved it. When he went abroad to take possession of the property of his deceased uncle, in your presence we plighted vows of constancy, and swore to sanctify the union of our hearts, by joining our hands immediately on his return. Alas ! our promised happiness was destined only to be viewed at distance ! His return, so ardently wished, so fondly expected, was to me the mandate which cut off my dearest hopes, and doomed me in the spring-time of life to an early grave. Unlooked-for circum-

stances detained him longer than was expected ; the pernicious climate preyed on his constitution, but hoping that the cheering breeze of his native land would restore him to health, in his letters he forebore to mention his indisposition, and only expressed the happiness he expected in a re-union. How vibrated every nerve in fond expectation, when the arrival of the fleet was announced ; and how cruelly were my hopes dashed to the ground, on beholding him carried in, pale, emaciated, and death-like !—The shock was more than electric ! I would have fainted, but despair gave me strength, and springing forward, I gazed on him in silent agony. Raising his head with difficulty, he fixed his glassy eyes upon me, and extended his feeble arms ; I sunk into them : he faintly uttered, “ Sophia, farewell ! ” and straining me to his bosom with the grasp of death, breathed out his soul !—You tore me forcibly from the much-loved corpse ; I was not delirious, my grief was

silent, but deeply rooted. I complained not, for I felt that I would soon again behold my beloved Horatio.

Your affectionate cares were again exerted to rescue me from the tomb ; but nature had done her utmost, and the grave of my soul's husband was opened to receive me.

O Evelina, how shall I describe the overwhelming bliss which burst upon me at my soul's emancipation ! The first object that met my wondering sight was Horatio, not as I last beheld him, in the agonies of death, but blooming in immortal youth ! The most ravishing melody poured from golden harps, joined by the voices of angels, welcomed me to the skies. Our parents met me with songs of joy ; I was conducted to the third heaven, into the presence of the Most High. Here all is unutterable : I dare not, if you could understand, reveal more. One day you and your beloved partner will share with me the joys of heaven. The innocence

and virtue of your lives, with your humble faith,
secure this for you.

I have been permitted this indulgence, in
order to soothe your immoderate grief for my
death: accept, then, thankfully, the consolation
sent you from heaven; recollect this is no common
epistle from a fellow-mortal; mourn me then no
longer as dead; ah! I have never lived till now!

Adieu, my beloved Evelina! yet a little longer,
and the darkness will be dispelled, and the veil
will be raised, which divide eternity from time.
Till then, wishing you the best of blessings on
earth, and an easy entrance into immortality,—
farewell.

LETTER IV.

TO LADY —— FROM HER DECEASED DAUGHTER.

IN the abodes of the blessed, encompassed with never-ending delights, and possessing all that can gratify an immortal soul, to thee, my beloved mother, remembrance fondly recurs. Thy immoderate grief for my untimely death, has induced me to offer this consolation from the mansions of the just. Yes, my ever dear, my still respected and venerable parent, not even the joys of heaven, though far, far surpassing the most brilliant idea that mortal imagination can form, will ever erase thy loved image. I am often by thy side; I listen to thy fond complaints, and when you lament me as dead, I am more with you than while on earth. A party of pleasure, a journey to the country, and

many unavoidable occurrences, then intervened to separate us, but now nothing can divide us; swift as thought the disembodied spirit can penetrate from far beyond the sun and stars, to the inmost recesses of earthly abodes. You hesitated not in granting me permission to go to India, to him who had received my early vows, yet when the account of his supposed death withered my prime, and cropped the flower of my youth, you repined at yielding me to my God and Redeemer. O grieve not for my death; in heaven only is there real life. Did you know with what pity immortals behold the inhabitants of the earth, with what surprise view their frivolous pursuits, instead of grieving for me, you would rejoice at my felicity, and long for the period which would free you from every earthly tie, and fit you for the society of heaven.

O my mother, in vain would I attempt to convey some faint idea of Paradise, for language fails! The glory and majesty of the heavenly

powers, can neither be imagined nor described. At my release from the earth, a scene more ravishing than can possibly be conceived, met my astonished sight ! Instead of struggling with the pangs of dissolution, I felt myself suddenly endowed with agility and vigour inexpressible. I was impatient to offer up my feeble tribute of gratitude to Him who bestowed on me faculties capable of the bliss which encompassed me.— Enraptured I joined the choir of angels and spirits of the just made perfect : more I am not permitted to reveal, but let this suffice to reconcile thee to the dispensations of Providence. Often I reflect with astonishment on the infatuation of mortals, ignorant of futurity, or viewing it only, "as through a glass darkly," the summit of their desires is directed to the things of the earth, which, when attained, they at best enjoy but a few years. Their wishes extend only to the society of a few fellow-mortals; here we enjoy the friendship and affection of the wise and

good of all ages since the commencement of the world. Here we are possessed of joy inexhaustible, emanating from the immediate presence of the Divinity. Here the forlorn beggar is surrounded with glory and honour, while the proud potentate is rejected.

After having viewed all the wonders of heaven, an angel conducted me to the gate of hell; shrieks, groans, and blasphemies, resounded from the dreadful cavern. This place of unutterable horror, of “weeping and gnashing of teeth,” I will not, I cannot attempt to describe. I beheld with pity the concourse of wretched spirits, whose aerial frames were not proof against the subtlety of the flames, and gave glory to God for having preserved me, by the power of his grace, from misery like theirs. I reflected, that had my life been prolonged a few years, numberless temptations might have drawn me from the ways of righteousness, and plunged me into an abyss of never-ending woe ! Of all earthly beings, none

enjoyed a brighter prospect of happiness, and who could promise that my heart would remain uncorrupted? Deluded by the phantom which glided before me, I might have desired too much the continuance of sublunary enjoyments; might have closed mine eyes against the prospect of a world to come, and repined at the shortness of life. I was interrupted in the midst of these reflections, by a voice calling upon me; I looked, and beheld with surprise thy once loved friend Araminta, who left the earth a few months before my dissolution. "Approach her," said my angelic guide, "and listen with attention." I obeyed, and expressed my astonishment at beholding her there;—she who was loved by the old, and reverenced by the young; whose piety and charity were almost proverbial; whom divines heard with admiration, and whose name the breath of calumny never tainted. "Alas!" said she, "the world never knew me: my piety was only assumed, and my charitable acts were

spread before the world to dazzle and allure. My humility was only a cloak, for in reality I was proud and arrogant. I said in my heart, 'Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as others are,' and my state was more pitiable than that of the worst of sinners. Far from concealing from the left hand the works of the right, I gave no alms in private; I have turned the poor and needy from my door, because no one was by to witness my munificence. I constantly attended divine worship, not to amend my heart, or to incite others by my example to piety, but, like a depraved guilty wretch, to conceal my real self in the sacred garb of religion. The felicity of my friends always brought a pang to my heart. I beheld with envy thy blooming youth and beauty. Thy approaching union filled me with anguish, and I was meditating means to prevent it, when the approach of death put an end to my schemes and completed my ruin. On my death-bed the same infatuation attended me; I con-

ceived that the good I had done would be my passport to the bliss of the just ; but the dreadful moment arrived, and with it woe eternal. Now, *you* receive the reward of innocence and virtue ; *I* of hypocrisy and deceit." This sad account filled me with horror, when my companion said, " You see the doom of that wretched spirit ; had she not foolishly and unthankfully abused the mercies of God, and left undone the work for which she was created, but performed her duty unfeignedly and cheerfully, not hypocritically nor vauntingly, she had appeared before her Judge with confidence and hope, and been received into the mansions of the blessed."

O my mother,—by contrasting the difference of our states, learn to bow with humble submission to the will of the Eternal ; await with faith and resignation the time when we shall meet in the everlasting kingdom, never more to separate.

ged with exultation to the abode of devils, there to dwell for countless ages, amid scorching flames, the shrieks and blasphemies of the damned, and its own unavailed remorse. Dost thou not feel the force of this picture? I know thou dost. Beware, then, employ the time allotted thee, in repentance and reformation; by repairing thy crime, and fulfilling the duties of life with pious care, study to obtain that inward peace which flows from an approving conscience, and a well-grounded hope of heaven.

Fernando! ours was no common affection; it was the gentle endearing sympathy of kindred minds, united by the strong bond of esteem, and animated by the same pursuits. We looked for happiness in this world, but we also undrew the curtain, and viewed the scene beyond it; our final wishes were directed to another and a better world; to the hope of partaking its joys together. It was not passion, it had religion and virtue for its source; those were the ties which

united our hearts. Living in the same village, we distinguished each other, not for outward charms alone, but the mental beauties which each fondly imagined the other possessed. But dost thou not remember, Fernando, the period and circumstance which put it beyond the power of fate itself to disunite our hearts? One of the days which the church has wisely appointed for the commemoration of the death of our blessed Saviour for the deliverance of sinners, we knelt together at the holy altar; our prayers ascended at the same instant to the throne of grace: each felt actuated by a divine enthusiasm; the world receded from our view, and we already felt ourselves partakers of the bliss of the just. Faith, and the sublime spirit of religion, strengthened our souls, and inspired the hope that our petitions would be accepted by the God of the universe, through the mediation of the blessed Jesus.

I recollect the last conversation we had to-

gether. "O Adelaide!" you said, "how grateful am I to the Giver of all goodness, that He has created us for each other; but, oh! should death tear thee from me, what would remain for me on earth? A solitary wanderer in this busy world, life would be a burden too heavy for me to bear; or what, if I were summoned to the tomb, would be thy consolation? "We would meet again in heaven," I replied; "we are but pilgrims here; our union would not be dissolved by death: The departed spirit, although invisible, would hover around her mate. She would fondly watch the object who on earth shared alike her joys and cares, with whom her happiest days were spent, and from whom, when re-united in that blessed country, where sorrow will be no more, no vicissitudes of time or chance will ever be able to separate her." Fernando, let this be thy consolation, and indulge no longer a fruitless sorrow; humble thyself before the footstool of

the Most High, and in deep contrition confess thy guilt.

A well-spent life, and sincere repentance for thy intended crime, will, through the mediation of our Redeemer, wash away thy stains. Study so to live, that thou mayst obtain the approbation of Heaven ; much is required of thee, for much is in thy power. Contribute to the happiness of thy fellow-mortals ; thou canst make the hearts of the widow and the orphan to sing for joy. So, even on earth thou shalt know happiness ; and when thy course is finished, and the shadows fly away, thou wilt sleep in Jesus, and awake to life eternal.

LETTER VI.

FROM AN AFRICAN SLAVE TO HIS WIFE.

FAR from the abodes of mortality, my ever beloved Morna, the once afflicted and grief-worn Azid rests in quiet from his sorrows. Here the victim of inhumanity finds refuge from persecution ; here the master and the slave are equal ; tyranny loses his power, and here alone suffering innocence finds redress. I have, unseen, beheld thy tears for my uncertain fate ; grieve no longer, Morna ; we trod together a thorny path ; I have first reached the end, and for thee also, my suffering, my tender wife, a dwelling is prepared in this abode of everlasting bliss.

Well mayest thou remember, Morna, that dreadful day which for ever separated us on earth ! Made prisoners by the chance of war,

we still enjoyed a gleam of comfort while permitted to wear our chains together. When sold by our conquerors to an European trader, my haughty soul, accustomed to command a powerful nation, could ill brook the condition of a slave; 'twas thou alone calmed my rage, and soothed the tempest of my mind; but when I viewed thy chains, and the evils of futurity presented themselves in dreadful array to my tortured imagination, the thought unmanned me: I execrated our conquerors, cursed our wayward fate, and a thousand times resolved at once to end our misery and our lives. We were, with my unfortunate subjects, exposed to sale, and purchased by different masters. O Morna! what a stroke was that! the separation of the soul and body, compared to that dreadful moment, is felicity. Although now freed from every painful feeling, the recollection of that day is imprinted in my soul to eternity. Thy heart-rending shrieks, thy supplicating arms stretched to-

wards me, raised in my breast the frenzy of despair. I would have released or died with thee, but numbers overpowered me; I was secured, and carried off impotent—we met no more.

I had become the property of one whose humanity towards his slaves, insured their love and reverence; he compassionated my sufferings, and treated me rather as a son than as his slave. He listened with benignity to my tale of woe, while a tear on his manly cheek, spake at once, the friend and the good man; he made inquiry who was thy master, and on learning told me he would purchase thee, as he was going to that part of the island in a few days, when I should accompany him: I fell at his feet, penetrated with delight, admiration, and gratitude! Hope once more dawned in my breast; I regretted not that I had been a prince in Africa—No! I thought only of again beholding my beloved Morna. Alas! how short-lived are the hopes of mortals. Our master fell

suddenly sick, and died in a few hours; the tears and heart-felt lamentations of his friends and dependents, bore testimony to his worth. How changed became my condition ! His heir, impatient to possess his immense wealth, and to depart for England, ordered a general sale of the property, and I found myself a slave indeed. The person on whose plantation I now was, far from seeking to mitigate, by gentleness and compassion, the sufferings of his slaves, caused to be inflicted on them every species of cruelty. I will not recapitulate the miseries I endured. Grief, disappointment, and despair, withered my strength, and depressed my spirit; still I complained not, and my silence was misinterpreted obstinacy, which was an incitement to greater severity. One evening I was laid beneath a friendly tree, smarting with stripes, and bleeding at every pore; in frantic sorrow I called upon death to end my misery; I raised my arm to plunge a dagger into my heart, but the idea

that Morna still lived, and a feeble gleam of hope that we might meet again, withheld me. A thought flashed on my mind, and obstinately retained its hold. Surely there was a being after death; the active soul within could not perish with the body; man could not be co-equal with the beasts of the field; were reason and understanding given him to perish like them? No! every surrounding object points out the agency of a Being superior to this feeble race. Our priests had told us of a future state, but I was dissatisfied with their doctrines. I had beheld the worship of Europeans so different from ours; I had acquired a considerable knowledge of their language, and had heard of a Redeemer who came into the world to save sinners; but I knew not the meaning of the word; for, although those Christians punctually went to church at stated times, and performed every outward ceremony of religion towards themselves and each other, yet they

seemed to consider an Indian unworthy the name of man, and rather partaking the nature of brutes ; seeming to forget that he possesses an immortal soul like themselves, and making no attempts to instruct him in the knowledge of religion, thereby drawing upon their own heads the wrath of heaven, by neglecting the most important of all duties. The scene was gloomy, and calculated for contemplation ; high and rugged rocks surrounded me ; a torrent rushed with impetuosity from a precipice, and forming itself a passage over the rocks, with hideous roar, foaming, pursued its course, fit emblem of the tempest within my breast : but when I raised mine eyes to the blue expanse of heaven, how calm and serene was its aspect ! the active soul within me seemed impatient of its restraints and longed to soar beyond the confines of mortality. In the midst of these reflections, I beheld a venerable form at some distance ; he saw me, and approached with looks of benevolence and pity ;

he was a white man; yet, an innate sensation compelled me to love and esteem him. Addressing me courteously, he drew from me a description of my situation; at first he seemed to participate in my resentment, but by degrees he soothed the turbulence of my spirit, and calmed my rage. He talked of the rewards of virtue and religion, procured to the just by the mediation of the Son of God, who, to save sinners, suffered a shameful death. My soul hung on his words, while he expounded to me the doctrines of the Christian religion. We parted, mutually pleased, and appointed a time to meet again, when he had so fully instructed me, and removed my doubts, that I entreated to be baptized, which was accordingly done. From that period a thorough change took place in my sentiments: I was no longer the haughty African prince; I became humble and tractable; I submitted to my lot with patience and resignation, and my tormentors, tired of cruelty, or,

swayed by my altered manner, ceased to persecute me; but nature, exhausted, sunk into the grave.

On my deathbed, I was attended by the venerable priest, to whom I was indebted for the comparative ease I had enjoyed. He strengthened and comforted me in the hour of dissolution: I felt a presage of bliss unspeakable, and the testimony of an approving conscience spake peace and tranquillity to my soul. Calmly my spirit left its mansion, and instantaneously the unknown world opened to my view. O Morna, how changed was the scene! What rapture awaited the newly disembodied spirit! Heavenly forms, more brilliant and beautiful than the sun in his meridian splendour, surrounded the deathbed of the slave: Myriads of angels were waiting to receive his soul! I was instantly clothed with light as with a garment; a crown of glory was placed on my head; unconfined as air I floated in the empyrean. Q.

Morna ! how truly were the lessons of the venerable priest realized : Here my Redeemer liveth ; I have seen him face to face, and here we shall one day meet again. Death, which levels alike the tyrant and the slave, will swiftly open for thee the portals of everlasting life ; will release thee from the galling chains of slavery, to freedom eternal. This I would have told thee, this I was permitted to do : even in heaven thy loved idea haunted me. I quickly sought thee : I viewed thee, my long-lost wife, beheld thy sufferings, and sought to mitigate thy woes ; then, divesting myself of the seraph's form, I appeared in the one you knew so well. Deceived by the resemblance, you believed that the living Azid stood before you. At first amazement and joy combating in thy breast, chained thee to the spot, but seeing I moved not, you sprung with frantic eagerness to fly into my arms. Aware of thy attention, I rose from the earth, and re-assuming my immortal

form, pointed to the skies, and disappeared. I have since often invisibly attended thee: convinced of my death, you weep and mourn incessantly. Morna, incur not the displeasure of the Omnipotent by repining at his dispensations; but, from the sublime truths in which thou also art instructed, thou mayest draw consolation and peace. Hard indeed seemed our lot, and gloomy were our souls, when torn from all we held dear; but through the path of misfortune was our way to eternal life. O Morna, the time will shortly come, when we shall meet in the land of unutterable joy! A blessed reward for our sufferings awaits us in a long eternity! O could I impart to thee the smallest portion of the rapture I felt when released from the clay! In one little moment I was exalted far above the kings of the earth; in one moment was wiser than the most learned philosopher. The poor African slave was clothed with glory and honour, while his oppressors were grovelling in

the dust ! Yet a very few seasons will pass away ere we meet again. We will then think of our earthly misery but as an unpleasant dream, which vanishes before the light, and leaves scarce a trace on the imagination. We will visit our country from whence we were torn; we will behold our much-loved relatives, and, while they bemoan our loss, we will say, we live, we are happy, a blessed eternity is ours. Crowns and sceptres we view with contempt : You are among the dead,—ye walk in the valley of the shadow of death : We know no sorrow, we feel no care; in the presence of God we dwell, — **HE** is our never-failing source of bliss !

LETTER VII.

FROM THE MISERABLE RODOLPHO TO HIS SISTER.

FROM the abyss of woe and torment, thy wretched brother, O Jacintha ! has obtained permission, in mercy to thee, to give thee warning by his dreadful doom, and to snatch thee from the gulph of predition, on the margin of which thou art already tottering, and seest not the awful chasm below ! Sister, once beloved, and still remembered with regret and anguish, companion of my untutored childhood, and of my maturer age, oh ! take heed and escape, while thou canst, from this place of horror !

It was I who poisoned thy yet spotless mind, and instilled the pernicious maxims which proved the overthrow of thy principles, and led thee into a labyrinth of iniquity, the mazy windings

of which thou couldst not escape. I will retrace the various scenes of life we have together encountered, and recal to thy memory the causes of our ruis.

Our pious and exemplary mother, you well know, died, while we were yet incapable of estimating her worth, or discerning the loss we sustained. We wept, indeed, and grieved, but were not suffered to indulge our sorrow; we were taken from the chamber of death to scenes of revelry. Our father loved riotous pleasures, his days and nights were spent in drunkenness and noisy mirth; with such dispositions, his children could not occupy much of his care, or, if a casual feeling of nature warmed his breast, it was only shewn by permitting us to view his habits of dissipation and irregularity. Accustomed to associate only with the most depraved of the human species, vice became familiar to us, and, unrestrained by religion, we had no difficulty in overcoming the prejudices which

reason implants in every breast. Hardened in iniquity, I formed a more atrocious and diabolical plan of wickedness than we had yet attempted,—a plan which fixed my eternal doom ! It was to poison that father who was so little worthy of our affection, and obtain possession of his immense wealth ; but when I made you acquainted with my design, you shuddered with horror, and conjured me to drop the dreadful idea. Attributing your refusal to timidity, I resolved myself to be the sole perpetrator of the horrid deed, which I accordingly accomplished, nor was the cause of his sudden dissolution ever suspected ; but, though concealed from mortals, the omniscient God beheld the crime, and his just vengeance quickly overtook me. Our father was hated by all ranks, and each rejoiced in the event as fortunate. It was then the pangs of guilt shook my agonized frame, when I heard, in the imprecations la-

vished upon his memory, what would one day be poured on my own.

You at first reproached me bitterly with the crime I had committed, but conscience soon became tranquil, or rather we forced that unerring monitor to be still. Intoxicated with the splendor that surrounded us, and the homage we every where met, (which worldlings never fail to pay the wealthy and powerful) we plunged headlong into every species of vice. The veil was soon rent ; the world viewed us as we were, the virtuous shunned us, and those whom interested views incited to court our society, in private despised and abhorred us. We felt our situation, and reviled each other as the cause. Our affection was converted into the most rancorous hatred, and we fled from each other, as from the eye of a basilisk.

You know the cause of my untimely death. I had insulted the wife of a gentleman, who demanded satisfaction from me ; we met, and

he was victorious: he instantly fled, and I, whose word was so lately obeyed as a law, and whose frown made my vassals tremble, was left to perish unheeded and unmourned ! I had for some time writhed in agony, when a countryman passed, and saw my state with compassion ; he alighted to my assistance, and poured some water into my parched lips : I had just time to tell him my name, and the circumstances of my situation, when the cold hand of death, which was before heavy upon my heart, compelled my terrified spirit to quit its mansion. Oh ! what pangs in the moment of dissolution agonised my soul ! But, when freed from her clay tenement,—O God ! Jacintha, my sister,—mayest thou escape my dreadful fate ! Fiends of darkness were watching to seize the scarcely disembodied spirit. Vain was the attempt to escape. The angel of justice, severe in awful beauty, approached ; in his hand flamed the sword with which he expelled our primeval parents from Pa-

radise ; by an irresistible impulse, I was compelled to follow him to the presence of the Redeemer of mankind, but to me inexorable Judge ! The effulgence of his glory, which to the just imparts a portion of his majesty, and fills them with delight, was, to the spirit clogged with iniquity, a source of confusion and woe. The awful sentence,—“Depart into everlasting fire !” still vibrates in my ear. At that dread mandate, I was dragged with exultations to the gulph of perdition. Ere the infernal portals closed upon me, I cast a look towards the mansions of the just, those scenes of felicity once in my power to attain ; I beheld the Most High on the throne of heaven. I heard the melody of golden harps, and celestial songs, poured forth in adoration of the Great Creator, but I was lost for ever ! In this place of horror and unspeakable woe, the abode of devils and of the damned, must I dwell for a long eternity ! Your world shall be dissolved, the sun, moon,

and stars, shall pass away, but time and immeasurable ages will flow, and bring to the wretched spirit no relief. Blasphemies and mutual revilings add keenness to the flames, which can never consume the miserable victim. O Jacintha ! what were my sensations when here I recognised my father : what poignancy it added to the gnawing remorse which will for ever prey upon me ! but, alas ! there is no repentance beyond the grave.

O Jacintha ! be warned by my dreadful doom. Atone, by unfeigned repentance, for the evils of thy past life ; it is not yet too late to deprecate the divine wrath : in solitude and devotion spend the remainder of thy days ; so shalt thou escape the punishment that awaits thee. So shall thy soul be fitted for the joys of heaven, and dwell for ever in the abodes of angels and of the just made perfect, and purified from guilt, thou wilt never know the misery of the wretched

RODOLPHO.

LETTER VIII.

FROM SYLVIA, IN THE CELESTIAL REGIONS, TO
HENRY, HER PERFIDIOUS LOVER ON EARTH.

WELL mayest thou tremble, Henry ! well mayest thou shudder in dismay at these well known characters ! She whose early bloom was nipt in the bud by thy artifices, whose tender years could not guard her from the snares of the seducer, now addresseth thee from the tomb. The lonely inhabitant of the grave, admonisheth the man to whom she owed her ruin. Yet, Henry, although the frail mansion moulders in its kindred dust, its immortal tenant has reached that peaceful shore, where resentment is lost in eternal felicity ; where injustice and ignominy cannot enter ; where the repentant and contrite sinner is made whole : but even

in this abode of endless bliss, remembrance, which no longer carries with it the painful and corrosive sting of conscious guilt, turns to him, by whose perfidy I was destined in the spring-time of life to an early grave. Memory fondly recalls the time, when Henry was to my youthful heart dearer than existence. Alas ! I ventured upon the great ocean of life in a slender bark,—a tempest arose, and I was lost ! Receive, with humility and gratitude, the warning from the tomb. Once Sylvia could arrest thy haughty soul in its career, and turn the tempest of the passions to gentleness and peace; shall not the voice of the dead arouse thy faculties to attention, and awake thee to a sense of danger ? Repent ere the day of grace be past, and thou hast no longer a choice ; dreadful is the precipice on which thou standest ; death already raiseth his scythe over thy head, and in the grave there is no repentance.

Reflect what various arts, what soft persua-

sions, were employed to work my overthrow ; too fatally they succeeded ; my heart, though pure as the breath of heaven, and chaste as the mountain snow, was not proof against them. When my only remaining parent paid the great debt of nature, and committed me to the care and guidance of his sister, he then foresaw not the evils that threatened me ; he imagined only in her, the friend of the helpless orphan, the protectress of his forlorn child, and with gratitude I clung to her, as the support of my youth, and solace of my afflictions. How cruelly was I disappointed ! Instead of the tender cares of a parent, harshness and severity chilled my hopes, and stern authority blasted my opening prospects. To this, Henry, you owed your triumph, and the conquest of a broken heart was long before secured. You deluded me with specious promises ; you dared to insult the Majesty of Heaven, by invoking Him to witness your vows of honourable love. Driv-

en at length to despair by constant ill treatment, in an evil hour I consented to quit my unfeeling relative, and place myself under your protection. Fatal determination ! better had I perished, or been a prey to the utmost malignity of fortune, for all troubles are comparatively light, while innocence and internal rectitude retain their place.

You know the manner of my death, but are ignorant that I myself, actuated by remorse, inflicted the fatal blow. It was supposed, when I was discovered in the wood, weltering in my blood, that I had been attacked by banditti, and as I continued speechless, my silence favoured the opinion, but could not hide from myself the consequences of a long eternity to the dreadful crime of suicide. But, ever blessed be the Creator and Ruler of all things ! although I languished, time was given me to atone, by sincere and bitter repentance, for the outrage I had committed against his laws.

Had I perished instantly, how dreadful now had been my condition ! O Henry ! could you form the most distant idea of the mental tortures I endured, in the dreadful interval from the time when I inflicted the fatal blow, to the release of my soul, you would acknowledge the power of God, and sue for mercy and forgiveness. The prospect of eternity, followed up with everlasting misery, continually presented itself to my terrified imagination ! Fiends of hell seemed watching to seize the guilty spirit. Sulphureous flames seemed to fill the apartment, and the groans of condemned sinners and shouts of infernal triumph vibrated on my ear. Methought I already heard the awful mandate of the Redeemer, "Depart, ye wicked, into everlasting fire !" At length the dreadful, the agonizing moment came, which was to separate me for ever from every earthly tie ! How loath was the dismayed trembler to quit its dwelling, and fondly cherished companion ! How did it

struggle to maintain its hold! but a powerful hand compelled it to depart, and with horror, which may be in some degree imagined, but never described, I lost sight of all sublunary things, and with the emotions of terror still quivering my serial frame, opened my spiritual sight on that unknown world, which a mortal can never behold.—What a blessed surprise awaited me! The angel of death no longer appeared arrayed in terror, but, clothed in radiant light, welcomed me to the mansions of the just. Thousands of glorious forms surrounded me, attuning their melodious voices to the sound of golden harps, which swelled in the divine chorus. A form, more brilliant and beautiful than the noon tide sun, told me, that my unfeigned repentance had washed away my guilt, and I was to be henceforward, and for ever, a beatified spirit. Gratitude to the blessed Son of God then employed every sentiment. I leaned on the bosom of the angel who deign-

ed to address a once sinful being, and poured forth the rapturous effusions of my new-born joy.

I dare not reveal the mysteries of this glorious place ; my felicity is indescribable. I cannot form an idea of happiness more perfect than what I at present enjoy ; yet, I am informed my bliss would have been doubled, had I not committed a dreadful outrage against the divine laws : my wishes, however, are satisfied, for, as in heaven there are many mansions, or degrees of happiness, the capacity of each spirit is suited to its allotted state.

O Henry ! allay, while yet thou mayest, the ire of an offended God ! Thou knowest not the dreadful punishments which await the wicked. Reflect, thy days are numbered ! the angel of death has marked thee for his prey ; oh ! let him not also destroy thy immortal soul ! Quit speedily the paths of vice in which thou art straying. Ah ! sure the seeds of virtue and honour, (that honour you once so

highly prized) are not quite eradicated in thy breast. No! I am convinced they are not; for often, in the dead of night, when weary mortals are wrapped in sleep, I behold thee stretched on thy couch, restless and miserable; when all nature, besides, tastes the sweets of repose, conscience speaks to thy heart. The still small voice, whose murmurs are silenced by intemperance, then thunders in thine ears. You call upon the injured Sylvia; in floods of tears you bewail her loss; you speak to her, she hears you, but dares not reply; she beholds you face to face, but, without some special purpose, the Almighty permits not departed spirits to manifest themselves to mortals.

On a due attention to this, depends your fate in eternity! When stretched on the bed of death, think, ah! think, what horrors will seize your soul, if you reject this warning! Your conscience will prove a dreadful tormentor. A review of your crimes will be as a dag-

ger to your heart. Just entering into a state unknown ; an awful, vast eternity before you ! —no Mediator to receive you,—only an incensed Judge and dreadful tribunal.—May you, by repentance, avoid the doom of the wicked ! May your purified soul be received into the celestial paradise,
When I should hail you to those blissful plains,
Where purest love in full perfection reigns !

LETTER IX.

FROM A SON TO HIS FATHER.

I AM permitted, O my father ! to address thee from the blest abodes of immortality ; for thee the dread curtain is undrawn, which cuts off communion between departed spirits and their late fellow mortals. I am permitted to warn thee of the fatal consequences of thy pernicious courses. Reflect, ere it be too late ; repent, ere the sand of life is run. Many are the sins which cry for vengeance on thy head ; here they are all laid open, thy secret crimes, thy inmost thoughts are registered ! Oh ! then, for thy soul's sake, make speedy atonement for past offences.—You well know that anguish for my father's crimes, was the cause of my premature decay : ah ! how little did I then conceive

the full extent of them ! Little did I imagine, while I beheld rapine and injustice mark his course, that crimes of a deeper dye, committed in secret, were hid from my view ! Listen with attention to the admonitions of the dead ; reject not the warning sent thee from the grave.

Behold, how futile is the policy of the wicked ! Thou wert thyself the dark assassin, that no associate in thy crime might be able to discover it ; and you supposed the deed unknown to all ! From mortals it was hid, but the eye of Omnipotence beheld it, and angels ceased their melodious songs, in sorrow for the guilt of man.

Delay not repentance, for great and manifold are thy transgressions, and the awful sword of the exterminator is suspended over thy head ; soon will it descend, and, (if thou rejectest this warning), hurl thee to perdition ! The wrath of an offended God, mighty in power, terrible in majesty, will ere long overtake thee ; nor

will his ire be appeased, till the thunderbolts of his vengeance overwhelm thee. Endeavour, by humble prayer and supplication before the throne of grace, to atone for thy crimes. Trust not the fallacious prospect of a deathbed repentance; thousands of wretched sinners have been lost by delay! Death may come without warning, and snatch thee, in the full career of vice, from the possibility of atonement. Say not, to-morrow I will repent; to thee, perhaps, to-morrow may never arrive.

Defer not then a matter of such infinite, everlasting importance. On what a slender thread, a moment of time, hangs your great eternal all! By sinne and unfeigned repentance, you will be cleansed from all your iniquities. When released from the body, your spirit, which is now clogged by sin and impurity, will be free and unconfin'd as air, and, robed in glory, will soar, swift as thought, through realms unknown; and passing suns

and worlds innumerable, the gates of the celestial paradise will be opened to receive you, — that blest abode, where sin and death are known no more; where sorrow and pain shall cease, and holiness and joy for ever dwell.

With such happiness placed within thy reach, wilt thou persevere in the works of iniquity? Wilt thou reject the solemn warning of the dead, whilst thou art tottering on life's narrow verge, suspended over the abyss of eternal woe? I have prayed, I will still pray to the Sovereign Judge for thy repentance. Join, O my father! join with me in imploring for thyself mercy and forgiveness; If thou art sincere, we shall be heard. The merciful Saviour will not reject the penitent sinner; so shalt thou escape the merited punishment of thy crimes in that doleful region where darkness and woe perpetual dwell; that gloomy kingdom where

hope never comes,
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd,
Such place eternal justice has prepar'd.

LETTER X.

FROM A MOTHER TO HER DAUGHTER.

To watch thee with a guardian angel's care, affection often calls me from the ethereal heights. With joy unspeakable, I behold thee follow the path of goodness.—When morning and evening, on bended knees, you address the Omnipotent in fervent prayer, I there, by thy side, join my petitions to thine; together they ascend to the throne of mercy, and the Eternal deigns to hear them. I have obtained permission to counsel and guide thee; I have heard thy tender complaints, that thou art deprived of the protecting care of a mother, in the time of perplexity and doubt. Ah! thou hast still a mother, who watches thee with anxious fondness. I am not visible to

thee; the divine laws forbid it, but darkness hides thee not from me, doors or walls are no impediment to a disembodied spirit, and though incapable of misfortune, I sympathize with thee in all thy pleasures and sorrows, as when on earth. I observe, however, part of your conduct with concern, though it proceeds not from depravity, but from youthful inexperience. I have witnessed the commencement and progress of your acquaintance with Valerius: he expressed an attachment for you, and, as you supposed, deceit could not dwell in a soul clothed with such a form, or perfidy be veiled by a countenance apparently beaming with benevolence and truth, you concluded that his mind was pure and spotless as your own. When he entreated you to become his wife, with much propriety you referred him to your father, but Lord ——— refused his consent, and commanded you to see your lover no more. You grieved and wept unceasingly,

and, by the assistance of your attendant, he procured an interview with you; after much hesitation, you consented to elope with him, and this evening he will return to carry you with him. Is this the fruit of the excellent education you have received, and the precepts I have so often inculcated? Reflect, and retreat, ere you embrace perdition, or infamy awaits you on earth, and eternal ruin in the world to come. Your lover, seemingly possessed of every virtue, has the soul of a fiend. His life has been spent in every species of vice, and he is already married to a young woman of humble birth, whose beauty attracted his notice.

After this admonition, let not a blind passion longer induce you to receive his addresses. Could you even lawfully become his wife, no happiness could be found with a libertine. Should his example fail to lure you from the ways of rectitude, (of which there is a fatal

chance), the idea that your companion, so fondly beloved, would in eternity be separated from you, would poison your gayest hours. You are young and amiable, these qualities will procure you many lovers: Choose not the finest exterior or the man of wealth, but he who is possessed of honour and probity, who reveres religion and follows her precepts.

As the sentiment which now occupies your breast, is the first violent emotion you have experienced, it will be difficult to conquer; but resolution and firmness must be called to your aid, and in every trial to which your earthly pilgrimage is subject, invoke the protection and favour of your heavenly Father; He is always present to assist those who call upon his holy name. Be also submissive and dutiful to your earthly parent; make his felicity your study; disobey not his will, and though on earth thorns may be strewed in your way, a

crown of immortal glory awaits you in the world of bliss.

But what lone shade approaches, pale as the moon when wrapt in clouds? Her hand holds a weeping willow; her golden locks are bound with cypress; she mingles not with the blessed, but far from angels bends her solitary way. She was on earth lovely and innocent like thee! The poor blessed her name; she was the widow's friend the orphan's stay. The young admired and loved her; the aged desired their children to imitate her virtues. A whole city resounded her praise, and by one crime, she fell: a fatal passion sullied that heart once pure as Alpine snow. The lovely lost one, in frenzy swallowed a fatal draught. Returning reason brought the sad remembrance, and with it tardy repentance. She is not with the wicked, yet I knew not her doom; whither still to wander in sight of the blessed, or if yet her wounds may be healed. Peace

be with thee, melancholy shade ! He who punishes, may wash away thy stains. O Althea ! in her sad example view thine own danger, and avoid the snare.

LETTER XI.

FROM A YOUNG MAN TO HIS COMPANION.

RECEIVE, O Alfred, with reverence and awe, this proof of an existence beyond the grave ! The dreadful truth we affected to despise, is now made manifest ! Take heed, O Alfred ! Once dear and inseparable companion, I conjure thee, by our early friendship, to fly from the paths of vice which we have often trod together, and from whence thou wantest resolution to escape. Be warned, ere it is too late, and atone by sincere and speedy repentance for past offences.

You well remember the promise we mutually made, that whoever died first should visit the survivor, and acquaint him with the mysteries of the hidden world, if such there was. You

waited my arrival for several nights, and as I did not appear, confirmed yourself in the pernicious principles you had imbibed. Although not permitted to become visible, I was at your side. You whistled as you went, and I observed with sorrow, the same air of levity and unconcern, that distinguished you when I was an inhabitant of the earth.

Of my present state, I must leave you in ignorance; but be assured, there is a just and terrible God, whose mercy is equal to his justice! For the greatest sinner, there is in store pardon and peace, if his repentance be true and unfeigned. Dreadful is the doom of those who perish in sin. Oh! then, for thy soul's sake, whilst thou hast time, repent! Already you stand on the verge of life's narrow bounds, and a few more revolving suns will open to your view, awful, vast eternity! A few days will present you before the great, impartial Judge, and fix you in a state irre-

mediable and irreversible. Devote, then, I earnestly entreat you, the short remaining period of your life, to the All Powerful God. Your sins cry aloud to heaven for vengeance, and soon your fate will be irrevocable : eleven times only will you yet behold the sable mantle of night spread over the earth. Doubt not this prediction ; the terrible, awful decree is passed. Once more, I warn you to confess your crimes. The Omnipotent is not inexorable, but will yet receive you, if your tardy repentance be sincere. Fly then to the footstool of the great Redeemer, and in deep contrition implore mercy and acceptance ; so shall you escape from impending fate and be blest.

I dare not unfold to you the secrets of eternity, compared to which the longest period of human life is but as a grain of sand on the sea-shore. Eternity ! awful word, that implies so much, how are all calculations swallowed up in its boundless extent !

ed up in thee ! When millions of ages have passed away, when centuries, countless as the atoms which fill the universe, have run, eternity will still be only beginning !

In our halcyon days of mirth and gaiety, how did we scoff at eternity and a world to come ! But to say truth, Alfred, our sentiments were not so sceptical as we affected : In every breast, however depraved, reason points out the existence of an all-wise Being, whose creatures we are, and who rewards or punishes according to our deserts. Dread then, his avenging power, and let not this admonition be lost ; seek him while yet he may be found, and he will deliver thy soul from perdition.

While I was with you on earth, had we shunned the company of the licentious, instead of indulging in vice ; had we dared to be virtuous, how bright had been our course through life ! O Alfred ! may this warning from the

dead sink deep into your heart. Avoid the society of those profligate young men, with whom you have so long been accustomed to associate. With such, what useful knowledge can you acquire, or what progress will you make in religious duties, on which depends the salvation of your immortal soul ? Their chief delight is in thoughtless dissipation. Religion, which never fails to inspire cheerfulness and serenity, is by them totally neglected. Their wild unnatural mirth, occasioned by inebriety, is of no longer duration than the cause which produced it, and is frequently succeeded by a sullen gloom, to the destruction of every rational and virtuous principle.

O Alfred, endeavour to redeem the time thou hast lost, and provide for a long eternity ! O prize the mercy which offers thee salvation through the mediation of the Son of God ! WHEN THE WICKED MAN TURNETH

**AWAY FROM HIS WICKEDNESS THAT HE HATH
COMMITTED, AND DOETH THAT WHICH IS
LAWFUL AND RIGHT, HE SHALL SAVE HIS
SOUL ALIVE.**

LETTER XII.

TO THERON, FROM HIS DECEASED WIFE.

THOUGH far beyond the reach of human calamities, the remembrance of thee, Theron, still lives in the immortal spirit. No common inhabitant of the earth now addresseth a fellow mortal; she who was once the wife of thy bosom, the partner of thy crimes, who was sunk by thee in an abyss of iniquity, implores thee to have pity on thyself, and fly from the wrath to come. Listen with attention, and let these lines be engraven on thy heart: Can falsehood exist in the silent grave, or deceit with the lonely dweller of the tomb?

Recollect, Theron, the various scenes of life we have together encountered, and the fatal crime, instigated by thee, which conducted

me to an ignominious death!—United by mutual love, we dreamt not that misfortune awaited us; for a time we were intoxicated with our happiness, careless of the past, and unmindful of the future; by this deceitful mode of reasoning we were ruined. But soon the charm was dissolved, and the flattering dream of love was dispelled by meagre want, with all her train of attendant ills. Unable to procure a scanty subsistence for ourselves, and the innocent pledge of our love, you urged me, while I abhorred the crime, to destroy him! Theron, 'twas thou wert the murderer! You witnessed the pangs that tore my heart when you proposed the horrid deed; every fond maternal feeling reigned in my soul, and mine eyes streamed in agony for my devoted infant: in vain I remonstrated and strove to save him; you continued obdurate and inflexible, and at length threatened my life, if I did not comply. I screamed, and trembled in

every limb. Horror, dismay, and a variety of passions, struggled in my breast, and shook the empire of my soul; reason forsook her seat, and, almost insensible, I destroyed my child! What pangs agonized my heart, when the innocent babe smiled in my face, unconscious of his approaching fate, looking all affection the instant before! Maternal love then shuddered with unutterable anguish.

For this you know I was apprehended, and condemned to suffer an ignominious death. The crime was thine, and the all-powerful God, who distributeth justice with an impartial hand, will in his wisdom avenge my cause. When I was re-committed to my solitary cell, all my soul was chaos and confusion, the exhortations of the venerable pastor, who attended to prepare me for the last awful scene, were unheeded. Death appeared in his most ghastly form, and every horrible idea overwhelmed me. The daughter of a family, dis-

tinguished for honour and probity, I who once possessed respectability, and every smiling prospect of happiness, was to be made a spectacle to a gazing crowd, to die like the basest and most abject of wretches on a scaffold, amidst the curses and contempt of an enraged populace ! I execrated thee, Theron ; I dared even to accuse Heaven of injustice, and, in the agony and despair of my soul, meditated on laying violent hands on myself. My frenzy, however, insensibly gave place to a disturbed sleep. All was silent and still like the repose of the grave, and the frightful images that occupied my waking thoughts, appeared before me in the visions of the night. Suddenly methought the darkness dispelled, and a strain of melody, soft as the music of the spheres, stole on my senses. An infant form, glorious, beautiful as the early morn, hovered over my couch. Two glossy wings of gold and azure shaded his shoulders ; his garment was dazzling as

the sun, and his face diffused a lustre all around. Insatiate, I gazed on my murdered babe, now the blest messenger of peace ! "Mourn not," he said, "that thine earthly course is finished, but grieve for the crime that caused thy doom. Cast thyself on the mercy of Infinite Goodness, by prayer and supplication, accompanied with sincere repentance, implore His forgiveness, and He who pardoned the penitent thief on the cross, will not reject thee." Thus seemed to speak the blest seraph, and winged his way through the airy space. I awoke in joy and hope, and worshipped HIM who deigned to send His angel to a wretch like me. My doubts vanished, as the grey mist is dispelled by the morning sun. I applied myself to work out my salvation, and beheld the awful period approach unappalled: Full of confidence in the mercies of my Redeemer, I beheld, without dread, the apparatus of death, hitherto so terrible in idea. An inward assurance

that I should dwell with angels and archangels, in the presence of Omnipotence, softened the horrors of death. I committed my soul to the care of the blessed Jesus; He strengthened my spirit, and received me into everlasting rest.

Theron, although you have escaped the laws of man, the vengeance of God awaits you: endeavour, then, to make your peace with him who alone can save you. How dark and dismal will seem the gloomy valley, if death cometh before thou repentest; and, how ghastly is the king of terrors, when hell follows his footsteps! Thou art tottering on the brink of a precipice; the ground moulders from beneath thy feet, and thou art in danger of falling, never more to rise. Unseen, I have visited thee, and observed thee struck with remorse for my shameful death: with pleasure I beheld the change, and hoped it would produce a reformation. Be assured, there is mercy even for thee; this is the darling attri-

bute of the Deity, who delighteth not in the spiritual death of the worst of sinners.

Prepare for the great and glorious change.
OH ! MAY THESE LINES BE READ WITH ATTENTION, AND THE TRUTHS THEY CONTAIN BE APPLIED TO THE HEART, THAT THE LAST AWFUL SUMMONS MAY BE RECEIVED WITH HOLY COURAGE, AND FAITH IN THE MERITS OF THE REDEEMER OF MANKIND !

END OF LETTERS FROM THE DEAD TO THE LIVING.

MORAL LETTERS.

MORAL LETTERS.

LETTER I.

FROM A YOUNG LADY IN HER LAST ILLNESS
TO HER FEMALE FRIEND.

Learn hence, ye lively and engaging fair,
To make your minds your chief and greatest care;
For Death, ere long, will close the brightest eyes;
But, heaven-born virtue never, ~~never~~, dies.

My dear and much-loved friend,

You will be surprised, and, I doubt not, grieved to learn, that this is the last letter you will ever receive from me, the fatal complaint which has long preyed upon me, having brought me to the brink of the grave.—Yes,

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Maria, the grave ! that last and lonely dwelling, which terminates the vain pursuits of mortals. But to the dying Christian the veil is raised ; death appears not arrayed in terrors, but seems a gentle smiling seraph, who guides, through the gloomy valley, the exhausted pilgrim soul ; beckons her on, with friendly gesture, to the realms of everlasting joy, and disappears.

Believe me, Maria, life, with all its fleeting pleasures ; fortune, with all its choicest blessings ; youth and beauty, with all their valued attractions,—would fail to lure me back (had I a choice) to the world, on which in a few hours, mine eyes will close for ever !

My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound ;
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise,
And in my Saviour's image rise.

Eternity, fraught with never-ending delights, opens to my view ! Soon disengaged from the clay, my spirit will soar through seas of æther, to the abodes of the blessed. I shall, with angels and archangels, offer up my feeble tribute of praise at the throne of the great Creator.

You, Maria, have often shared with me in the amusements common to our age; you have, I hope, as well as I, seen the fallacy of all sublunary enjoyments. O my beloved friend, take the advice of your dying companion, and renounce the delusive pursuits, so eagerly followed by many of our sex, while their souls are almost, if not entirely, neglected, in a round of dressing, visiting, and frivolous conversation. The allurements of dress, and the bustle of gaiety, will not prevent the form of symmetry, nor the most beautiful countenance, from being consigned to the mouldering grave, the prey

of worms and subjects of putrefaction. When stretched on the bed of sickness, those objects, so fondly pursued, so ardently desired, will appear only as childish toys, unworthy the notice of those who call themselves by the glorious name of their heavenly Master.

Now, my dear friend, I suppose you will pity me, and lament my death; but is that person an object of pity, who is about to exchange a life of sorrow and distress, for an eternity of bliss? No! rather rejoice with me, that I am in the prospect of everlasting happiness.

It is no doubt painful to leave those who are dear to us on earth, to take a long farewell of all we love here below; but how consoling and delightful is the reflection, even in the last agonies of expiring nature, that death is the Christian's best friend, as he opens the gate of

eternal life, and removes us from every evil ; and to those who die in the hope of everlasting bliss, through the mediation of our Redeemer, the grave is only, as Dr. Young beautifully styles it, "our subterranean road to bliss."

You, my friend, well know how bright were my prospects, how enchanting my views of happiness ; yes ! well could I have enjoyed life a few years longer ; still, after calmly viewing the brightest scenes and gayest pleasures, past, and in store for me, I can truly say, " to die is gain ; to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, is best of all."

Now, my friend, you will perceive, from what I have said, that I await the moment of dissolution with hope and joy ; true, my soul pants to be with God, I long to behold my Redeemer. In a few hours I shall see Him face to face, who bled upon the cross to save

mankind ! Oh ! what unspeakable joy rises in my soul ! Blessed Jesus, thou wilt receive my spirit. Thou knowest the excess of my love to thee ! When it is so fervent, while I am confined to the clay, how great will be my transport when I am thine for ever ! The night is almost past, the day dawns upon me, and vast, boundless, blessed eternity, opens to my view ! This frail body will return to its native dust, to be raised in purity at the awful day of retribution, and the spirit, partaking the glory of the Saviour, will dwell with him for ever ; but my strength fails, and wishing you every happiness that this world affords, and the best of blessings in time and eternity, my dear, a long farewell !



LETTER II.

FROM A LADY IN THE COUNTRY TO HER FRIEND
IN TOWN.

My Dear Cleora,

I HAVE now taken up my abode at _____ and gladly exchange the bustle of a gay metropolis, for the calm delights and peaceful pleasures of the country. To me, who have been accustomed to the dust and smoke of a city, the charms of rural life are so exquisite, that I am lost in wonder, at what I now consider the depraved taste of those, who, with such happiness within their reach, persevere in a round of thoughtless amusements, insipid in themselves, and destructive to the noblest ends of our existence. The contemplation of nature is one of the highest entertainments of

which the mind is susceptible. Such rational and innocent pleasures are less tumultuous than the festive joys of the gay and the voluptuous; but they leave behind them a grateful relish, and improve as well as entertain the thoughts.

I have since my arrival, contracted an intimacy with a young lady, of whose character I had often heard with admiration; and have now learned the particulars of her history, which is somewhat singular. She was the only child of an eminent merchant. Nature had lavished on her all the graces which can adorn humanity,—a lovely form, and an heart replete with every virtue. As the heiress of a large fortune, every fashionable accomplishment was bestowed upon her, and her parents instructed her in more useful knowledge. She sometimes appeared at public places of amusement; but did not visit them often enough to make herself cheap to the public eye; and she

preferred the affectionate approbation of her parents, and a few chosen friends, to the empty applause of the multitude. Although several men of distinguished rank solicited permission to address Miranda, till the age of nineteen, she met with none who could engage her affections. At that period, Mr. Percy, a young man of fortune, was introduced to her. As he possessed a fine exterior, and engaging manners, Miranda thought him the most agreeable of his sex she had yet seen. A mutual attachment was formed; he laid his proposals before her father, and was accepted. All preliminaries were adjusted; but how uncertain are human hopes! the father of Miranda was, the morning before that appointed for the ceremony, found dead in his bed. The distress of his family may be better imagined than described. The nuptials, thus unavoidably postponed, the lover appeared the most affectionate and inconsolable of beings. In a few days

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Mrs. B—— followed her beloved partner to the grave ! She had neither spoken nor wept since his death, and refused every kind of nourishment, till, exhausted by grief, the tomb of her husband was opened to receive her. Judge of the situation of my friend. Alone, in a busy world, chaos seemed to have returned, as she wept over the sad remains of her parents. After the storm of grief was in some degree abated, one confused idea associated itself with the gloom of her thoughts,—It was the image of her lover. That idea, formerly connected only with visions of happiness, was now fondly cherished as the only good she could still call her own ; and that Percy would soon be really her own, she felt assured. He still continued to visit her, and expressed a fond wish that she would hasten the nuptials ; but respect to the memory of her parents, determined her to defer it to a proper period, and in the interim she employed herself in examining the state of

her fortune. Here a dreadful shock awaited her: The affairs of her father were in the utmost confusion, and Miranda was soon fatally convinced, that, after discharging his debts, only a scanty pittance would fall to her lot.

In this emergency, her native fortitude did not desert her. She immediately wrote to Mr. Percy, and candidly informed him, that she had now only her hand and heart to offer; but well the innocent maiden felt assured, that these alone were what he prized: as he had so often vowed that he loved her for herself alone, what inexperienced girl could doubt an assertion so flattering? Time, however, shewed the fallacy of such delusive hopes; day after day elapsed, and he came not; by which Miranda was convinced that her supposed fortune was his only aim.

Heart-rending was the conviction, but she

sunk not under it ; although the orphan grieved, the Christian triumphed. Her poverty was soon rumoured abroad, and she found herself deserted by almost all her softer acquaintance ; only a very few unchanging friends remained, who endeavoured to soften her situation, and strove to comfort her. Often has she dwelt to me on this part of her story, and with tears acknowledged, that but for their affectionate cares, she would have sunk, exhausted by her sorrows. O my friend, how delicious must be the sentiment that fills the mind, when soothing the sorrows of the unfortunate,—when wiping the tears from the eyes of youth and beauty, and binding up the wounds of the broken heart ! But to return to my narrative. The high soul of Miranda would not suffer her to remain dependent on the bounty of her friends, and she resolved on earning a livelihood by those accomplishments, which were intended to shine in the world of

gaiety and fashion. The science of music she pitched upon as the means of subsistence; but at this period an unlooked-for occurrence caused her to drop the project. A distant relation, with whom the family of Miranda had never been on terms of intimacy, died, and left our heroine her whole fortune, which was very considerable. She was pleased, but not elated, by this unexpected change in her circumstances. She remembered the indignities she had suffered, and valued her newly acquired wealth, only as it enabled her to assist the unfortunate.

This event circulated with the same rapidity as the former distressing one, and Miranda again saw the door of her humble habitation crowded with visitors. She received her false friends with cold civility, and determined to shun them in future.

One day she was sitting alone, reading over some letters of her faithless lover, which she was about to commit to the flames, when Percy himself was announced ! Her surprise deprived her of utterance, and fixed her immoveable, when he (not without some confusion) attempted to apologize for his neglect, and made many protestations of unchanged love and constancy : — his attempt was vain ; he was heard with indifference, and dismissed with contempt.

Miranda was now disgusted with the treachery and inconstancy of the world, and adopted a plan which she has since put in execution. She employed a friend to look out for a sweet sequestered spot, where her life might be spent in solitude and peace, without being under the necessity of associating with those whom experience had taught her to despise. Such a retreat was found, and here, in the

bloom of youth and beauty, she fixed her residence.

That delightful dwelling, nature and art have alike contributed to embellish. It is situated at the foot of a hill, which shelters it on one side from the bleak northern blast, while the other is concealed by a forest, the growth of ages. A pure stream, issuing from a romantic cliff, forms a beautiful cascade, and runs murmuring through a verdant meadow.

The village of _____ is situated about a mile distant, and consists chiefly of poor families, who, according to their wants, experience her bounty. The day never dawns that does not witness her beneficence; and the sun never sinks to rest, without the prayers and blessings of the needy, wafting her name to heaven: Nor to those alone is her charity

confined. She causes enquiry to be made of those whom modest pride would induce to conceal their necessities, and conveys relief in a manner from which even delicacy itself would not shrink.

She has, upon her own domain, an establishment for young girls of honest birth, where they are instructed and maintained at her expence, and under her auspices. Two teachers are provided, of exemplary morals, and acknowledged abilities. Once every week, she visits them in person, examines their progress, and bestows rewards on the most deserving, while from all, her affability and gentleness insure love and admiration.

Her door is ever open to infirm age, and the unfortunate always know where to find a benefactress, for Miranda is the friend of the

distressed, the encourager and comforter of modest merit.

Thus, in the prospect of universal philanthropy is spent the life of the youthful Miranda. In this delighted solitude, the lovely maiden is perfectly contented. No cares disturb the unruffled serenity of her soul, and the casual evils of life, to a mind governed as hers, glide on unnoticed. She is truly religious, without being a gloomy devotee; each morning and evening her prayers ascend to heaven in a spirit of pure devotion. Her conversation is lively and instructive, and her deportment is engaging and courteous to all.

Thus, every passing day is marked by some good action; but, though constantly engaged in useful pursuits, and the love of solitude seems her predominant passion, there

are a few families in the neighbourhood with whom she associates. I am proud in possessing no common share of her friendship, and see with pleasure that my daughters strive to emulate her glorious example. Oh ! when a few more revolving suns have matured their youthful minds, may they indeed resemble her !

The beauty, extraordinary accomplishments, and transcendant virtues of Miranda, have, since her residence here, induced several gentlemen of fortune to address her; but she has rejected them in a manner which prohibited their renewal; and she assures me, that, unless she meets one whose taste and sentiments are congenial to her own, she will never form the connubial tie. As she will not be caught with the baits by which so many young females are attracted; namely, the glitter of wealth, title, or external

graces, only the truly good man will obtain her regard. He who has philosophy enough to withstand the fopperies of fashion, the inconsiderate follies of the gay and the licentious, and in a degenerate age, has courage to be virtuous. "How," she has said to me, "could I reasonably expect happiness with one whom I could not esteem? Were I to marry, I would choose, not a partner only for this transitory scene, but a friend of my soul, a companion for eternity! I am conscious of a wish, an humble hope, to live according to the laws of the Ruler of the Universe, and I enjoy a peace of mind which no earthly blessing can bestow; but, were I exposed to the daily, hourly conversation of a person, uncontrolled by the fear of God, or cold in the exercise of moral and religious duties, might not these sentiments be weakened, and at length entirely destroyed? In a future state, I believe the bliss of the

just to be supreme, and unallayed by bitter recollections, or how could happiness be perfect, while the partner of our mortal joys and cares was doomed to endless woe! On the contrary, what sweet delight will be theirs, whose humble efforts are accepted; who having assisted each other in spiritual progress, pass from sorrows and cares, to dwell together in the world of everlasting joy!"

Thus, my friend, I have given you an outline of the life and manners of an amiable female. When dreary winter approaches, she is employed in making clothes for the neighbouring poor; and sometimes, to beguile her leisure hours, has recourse to painting and music, in both of which she eminently excels. As she possesses also a talent for poetry, she has written several little pieces,

on various subjects; the following poem I received from her lately.

THE ROSE.

As through a garden late I rov'd,
 And musing walk'd along,
 While listning to the blackbird's note,
 Or linnet's cheerful song,

Around were flowers of various hues,
 The pink and daisy pied,
 When in the centre of a grove,
 A blushing rose I spied.

Eager to pluck the beauteous flower,
 I quickly hasten'd there;
 Securely in my bosom plac'd,
 And watched with tender care.

Its fragrant odours grateful were,
 And pleasant to the sense;
 Its leaves with brightest colours glow'd,
 Like virgin innocence.

But, lo ! ere ev'ning dews descend,
 Those beauteous tints were fled ;
 Wither'd and blasted in their prime,
 It droop'd its head and died !

Sweet blossom, then I sighing said,
 How soon thy beauties fly !
 The fairest flower the garden knows,
 With thee could never vie !

Be thou my silent monitor,
 And warn my heedless youth,
 To follow bright religion's paths,
 In piety and truth.

That while youth's transient charms decay,
 Those of the mind remain,

Which, like the polished shining ore,
 Their lustre still retain.

For outward charms, of shape or face,
 Soon wither like the rose,
 But virtue only is the source,
 From whence true pleasure flows.

O my friend, what a lesson does the life of this young and lovely female convey to the unthinking of her sex! Were my narration to be made public, to them I would say, Ye amiable part of the creation, imitate Miranda. Behold her, in youth and beauty's brightest bloom, shunning the unmeaning follies so eagerly pursued by thousands of both sexes, to the waste of that most precious time given them by the bounty of the Creator; of every moment of which they must one day give an account. Behold her, without austerity or bigotry, dedicating her

life to the service of her God. View her ministering to the lowest of her fellow-mortals, smoothing the brow of affliction, and speaking peace and comfort to the torn heart; then go and do so likewise. Though few have such extensive powers of usefulness, ALL have the means of doing good. ALL may improve in the ways of religion and virtue, and accomplish, in some degree, the highest ends of creation, by faithfully discharging their duty, and living so, that they may at last make a happy exit, and then find themselves in a better state.

LETTER III.

FROM LADY ——— TO HER FRIEND.

My dear Ophelia,

Surrounded with misfortunes, but for your friendly cares, I had sunk beneath the burden of my afflictions, how then can I refuse to your friendship the relation you have requested? Whatever I may suffer, by retracing scenes of happiness, past, never more to return, to you will I give the record. May you find instruction in my sad story, and avoid, by my example, the like misfortunes!

I am, as you well know, the only child and heiress of a noble family. Idolized by my parents, all their hopes were centered

in me. The first fifteen years of my life were passed in happiness without alloy; but, alas! the cup of bliss was dashed from me, and sorrow became my portion.

One day I accompanied some friends in a party of pleasure on the water. There was with them a youth, the son of a neighbouring gentleman, whom I had sometimes met in my rural excursions. He was about my own age, but an air of reflection and gravity, made him appear some years older than he really was. It was evening when we returned, and I was watching the last beams of the setting sun, as the water reflected them, when leaning too incautiously over the side of the little vessel, I fell overboard, and would have perished but for that intrepid youth, who, at the hazard of his life, leapt after me, and succeeded in bringing me to land. He conducted me home,

and, upon relating my danger, was received by my parents with joy and gratitude. After a short time he took leave, when my father addressed me to the following purpose: "Emeline, I am not insensible to the bravery of that young man, nor ungrateful for our obligations to him; but the daughter of the illustrious house of ———, must never stoop to marry the son of a simple country gentleman, therefore I desire you will see him no more." Awed by his manner I was silent; but my rebellious heart too sensibly felt how severe was the restriction.

I resolved however, to obey, and, for some time, my walks were confined to the boundaries of my father's domain; but one evening in autumn, the sun was gloriously setting in the west, and tinged the heavens with a blood-red hue: the scene was inviting, and I had

rasbled far, before observing that the shades of night were stealing on me. I was hastily returning, when I beheld Polydore (so was my deliverer named); he approached respectfully, but pleasure brightening every feature of his fine countenance, and my artless heart could but ill conceal its joy. He attended me to the gate, and gently pressing my hand, asked if he might not hope soon to see me again! Forgetful of my father's injunctions, I answered, that we might see each other in my walks. After this interview, we frequently met, and our mutual passion increased, till it was no longer in the power of any earthly occurrence to disunite our hearts.

On that day which the Church has appointed to commemorate the Birth of our blessed Saviour, it was resolved that I should make my first communion; and that epoch, interesting for me, was equally so to Polydore. Sharing

in every feeling of my heart, he informed his parents that it was his wish to receive the sacrament on that day. Oh ! how shall I describe my sensations when kneeling before the altar ! I thought I beheld the Deity descend, and say to his people, "Receive, my children, the pledges of my love and favour, be good, be happy. Renounce earthly passions, they only rend and trouble the heart ; virtue and religion alone give lasting Peace." Polydore knelt by my side : in that moment I wished that our souls could take their flight together, when our loves should be pure as those of angels ; when the frown of parents, and the sordid views of interest, would have no power to part us. Alas ! I reflected not how cruelly I perverted the divine commands, in acting contrary to that obedience due by children to the authors of their existence.

We met once more, and our tears flowed

together. Polydore pressed me to fly with him far from those scenes so hostile to our loves; but though in meeting him I had swerved from duty, I was not yet so depraved in sentiment, as to agree to this proposal. I rejected it therefore, as gently as possible, and endeavoured to inspire him with hopes, which I myself did not possess. He became, however, more tranquil: we talked of the ceremony in which we had participated, and he gave me some verses that he had composed on the morning of that day: I have still preserved them as a sad memento of those days of happiness. They are as follows:

ODE FOR CHRISTMAS.

O God! my Saviour, shield and stay!
 Of whom all creatures own the sway;
 Oh guide me through this holy day,
 In truest, strictest piety!—

To share the good thou dost bestow,
 In meek devotion let me bow
 Before thine altar, kneeling low,
 In holiest humility.

The glorious work of grace begun,
 The reign of sin and death is done ;
 This day appeared thine only Son,
 In lowly meek simplicity.

When born to bear the sins of man,
 No eye was there the scene to scan,
 But bright the radiant star began,
 To gild the eastern canopy.

It was revealed, while nature smil'd,
 Alone to shepherds in the wild ;
 And angels hail'd the holy child,
 In strains of heavenly melody.

How vast thy love to fallen man,
 Which form'd the great mysterious plan,
 When swift is fled life's little span,
 To give him immortality.

Teach me thy glorious power to praise,
 Tho' hid from us thy mystic ways;
 This atom-globe thine eye surveys,
 Diffusing glad serenity!

Oh ! guide me thro' the devices way,
 When care and sorrow claim their sway,
 Nor cause my weary steps to stray
 'Midst thoms of dire adversity.

If hope and joy combine to bliss,
 And fortune yields her bland caress,
 Oh ! may I never love thee less
 Than on this great solemnity !

Again our Lord will come from high,
 His trumpet sounding in the sky,
 And earth, and seas, and sun shall fly
 Before his glorious Majesty !

We continued to see each other, and our innocent and unsuspecting hearts opened themselves to the refined delights of unreserved confidence; while our passion, pure as the breath of heaven, blinded us to the prospect of misfortune. But soon a dark cloud overspread this gleam of sunshine. A treacherous domestic betrayed us to my father, and a rigorous confinement was the consequence. My relations continually upbraided me with meanness, in loving Polydore: I could only weep in silence, but I felt how easy death would be, compared to a separation from my lover! Long I endured their cruelty, but my spirit was at length broken: I promised all that they required. I vowed to see Polydore no more,

and resolved religiously to observe it; but I had already experienced how weak were reason and duty, when opposed to love!

When Polydore learned my releasement, he found means to get a letter conveyed to me, in which he so strongly painted his despair and his love, that my resolution was conquered, and we met as before. Our joy may be more easily conceived than described: he again entreated me to fly with him to some clime more propitious to our wishes. Swayed by the remembrance of my past sufferings, I consented. Polydore was dearer to my soul than the life-blood that flowed in my veins, and for him I resolved to forsake my country, my parents, and fortune. A short time we allotted to prepare for our voyage, but in that interval our intercourse was again discovered, and I was more closely confined than before.

Polydore was driven to despair by this unexpected event. He resolved to go abroad, and endeavour to amass a fortune, when he would return and demand me from my parents on equal terms. He had no fears for my constancy, but fondly hoped that love would prevent me from forming the connubial tie till his return.

On his departure, I was again set at liberty, but it was agreed by my relations, that the most effectual method to prevent my union, with Polydore, was to place me under the protection of a husband of their own choosing. They urged me the more, because the suitor was rich, though he had none of those accomplishments of mind and form, which so eminently distinguished my dear Polydore; but I remained firm in my refusal, nor could intreaties or threats move my constancy: I resisted

all arguments, and determined to preserve my faith inviolate.

One evening, taking up a newspaper, I read an account of the wreck of a vessel homeward bound from India, and in the list of those who perished, what was my agony on reading the name of my much-loved Polydore ! I will draw a veil over the dreadful catastrophe. I cannot describe my feelings, when I awoke, as it were, from a lethargy. I had been for some months in a state of insensibility, which it was feared would become confirmed insanity. Youth, however, and a naturally good constitution, enabled me to overcome my malady ; but the melancholy which preyed on my mind was incurable.

Often I wandered, by the pale moonlight, among those paths which are endeared to me by the remembrance of him, who alone was

the delight of my soul. Those scenes formerly so charming, seemed now a dreary wilderness; yet in those lone paths I loved to rove, and, sick of the world, found a melancholy pleasure in recalling every trace of happier days; and imagination taking wing, anticipated the happy moment, when loosed from its covering of clay, my soul would be welcomed to the abodes of the blessed by my lost Polydore; but my sufferings were yet not to end.

With returning health my persecutions were renewed; it was now deemed necessary to draw me from the constant indulgence of melancholy, and I was pressed to choose a husband from among the suitors who still surrounded me. In vain I asserted my wish to remain single, and the impossibility that I should add to any one's happiness, myself a prey to devouring grief: my parents were inexorable, and at length informed me that Lord —— was my

destined husband. Wearied out at length, by constant importunity, I reluctantly consented. "Yes," I said, "I will obey my cruel friends, but my heart is with Polydore among the dead."

I will pass over the bridal festivities, they were such as became our rank, and to me appeared only to warn me to the tomb; and thus the knot was tied which death only can loose.

After the ceremony, I endeavoured to compose my mind, by reflecting on the solemn duty devolved upon me; and resolved, if I had not a heart to bestow on my husband, to supply it by kind attentions and assiduities towards him; and confirming myself in these resolutions, I began to enjoy something of my wonted serenity and peace.

On the evening of the day after my marriage, I was sitting with my husband and a female friend in the saloon: the door was opened, and Polydore appeared! Polydore, who amid the destruction of hundreds had escaped the wreck, and was now to my tortured sight, a vision of horror! I thought it was his spirit, for he was pale as the sculptured marble. Amazement transfixes me, and in a broken voice, he uttered, "O Emmeline! behold once more the man whom you have for ever undone!" He said no more, but as he went out, cast a look upon me, which struck cold on my heart! yet it was not the expression of anger or reproach, but of fixed despair and unutterable woe. It was too much: I relapsed into my disorder, and was given over by my physicians, but Heaven again interposed, and preserved me, till the measure of my woes should be full.

One evening, a stranger was announced,

and a man of noble port entered my apartment, but his countenance wore a cast of indignation, and silent sorrow. He advanced, and looked upon me with an expression which froze my blood. "Listen," he said, "to a tale, which if thou hast ought human but the form, will harrow thy soul. Polydore charged me to acquaint thee with his fate; his last sigh was breathed in a prayer for thee. For you he vowed to die; in battle he met the death he sought! You, next to heaven, he loved, and, oh! be witness, Heaven, your falsehood killed him!" I heard no more, but blasted by the sudden storm, fell lifeless on the ground. I recovered, however, to a sense of my misery, but the fatal messenger was gone.

From that period, strange as it may seem, something of a sad calm took possession of my soul: but it was the rest of despair. I

had now no more to dread, no more to wish for. I thought I had exhausted every ill that could befall me; that the long tenure of my misery would be from henceforth unbroken; subject to no alteration; incapable of further increase.

From these gloomy reflections I was awakened to a sense, that I was yet to be useful among my fellow-mortals. The birth of a daughter excited in my bosom the most exquisite pleasure, united to the scorpions of ineffable sorrow. As I pressed the little stranger to my breast, and shed over her tears of thankfulness and regret, I prayed that she might be preserved from woes like mine. I became reconciled to life for the sake of the smiling innocent who owed hers to me. The tempest of my affections was hushed to rest, and I began to feel some tender sentiments for the father of my

babe, that indulgent husband, who pitied my misfortunes, and sought to alleviate them.

All my time was dedicated to my daughter, and her infantine caresses made me amends for my past sufferings. With rapture I beheld her little form increase in stature and loveliness: and with a mother's fondness, anticipated the time, when, her reason and understanding fully developed, she would become my dearest companion, and most tender friend.

Two years I enjoyed a state of tranquillity and happiness, which I had never expected on this side the grave: yet, at intervals, some tender recollections would intrude; the image of the ill-fated youth who died for me, haunted me in my gayest moments. From these dangerous intruders, I sought refuge in the infant prattle of my child,

and her tender endearments always brought balm to my heart. Already lisping half-formed words, her little hands were lifted up in prayer to the God of her fathers, but, alas ! a fatal distemper seized my little blooming cherub, and on the ninth day of her illness, she breathed out her innocent soul in my bosom !

Oh ! my friend, how shall I describe my anguish and despair ! No words or expressions can be found to pourtray them. I prayed for death, and, in the agony and delirium of my soul, dared to accuse Heaven for having created a wretch like me ! I kept the corpse of my babe in my bosom : I tried to awake it from a sleep which made me shudder, and endeavour to warm it in my arms ; nor could entreaties nor remonstrances remove me from it. If force was attempted, I sent forth the most piercing

shrieks, and held my lifeless babe with a convulsive grasp. Some days passed away, and putrefaction was begun; still I could not part with the body; but fondly hoped, that I myself was fast sinking to dissolution, and that I would be laid with my infant in the same grave.

Thus a week elapsed, when at the dead hour of night I was awake on my lonely couch, the remains of my babe in my bosom: my attendant slept in a closet adjoining to my apartment; a taper dimly gleamed on a table, and its feeble light made every surrounding object appear more dreadful. I looked around, and thought my room had the appearance of a sepulchre. I wished for death, but the ghastly king come not at my bidding. I felt myself the most forlorn, the most disconsolate of beings, and exclaimed, in the agony of exquisite woe, O

my God ! why hast thou forsaken me ! In that instant a flood of radiance, too great for mortal sight, filled my apartment, and, issuing from the intolerable blaze, Polydore stood by my bed ! His form was that of an angel of light. In his arm he held my lost infant, but, oh ! how different from the lifeless mass which then lay in my bosom ! Her form was more beautiful than the noontide sun ; a wreath of immortal roses entwined her golden ringlets ; two wings of intermingled azure and gold waved on her shoulders ; her figure seemed clothed with the sun ; for her garment can be described by no mortal texture ; her face was irradiated by the glory of God himself ! The little blooming heavenly cherub looked upon me with a smile of love and pity,—a smile that banished sorrow, and made joy spring up in my heart. I thought the blessed spirits had come to take me with them, and stretched out my arm's towards them, while they continued.

gazing on me with looks of unutterable affection. Sometime they remained, but spake not; at length Polydore, extending his arm over the bed, looked up, as if invoking for me the blessing of Heaven, and laying a letter upon the table that stood by me, the angelic forms disappeared.

The extacy that wrapt my senses continued long. My heart smote me for the ingratitude I had manifested towards the Divine Disposer of events, and I now reviewed my folly with surprise. At length I beheld the letter, and taking it up, recognized the well-known characters which had so often made my heart thrill with joy. It was as follows:

“ Why, O Emeline! dost thou mourn and weep, a prey to unavailing grief? Thy babe is now a ministering angel before the throne

of the Omnipotent ; thy lost Polydore is also with the just in heaven. Wouldst thou recal the happy souls from the society of God and his angels, to re-animate the corrupted covering of clay ? Wouldst thou recal them from bliss unspeakable, to the corroding cares and debasing desires of mortals ? Indulge no longer a sorrow which offends the Most High ; bow with humble resignation to the dispensations of his providence, and happiness will yet be thine : didst thou know the bliss we enjoy, thou wouldst rejoice in our releasement, instead of repining at our loss.

“ When the soul of thy loved infant was summoned into immortality, I was the first to welcome the little stranger to her native land. Couldst thou form an idea of her joy at a scene so new, thou wouldst rejoice at

having reared a child to the Lord. When rising from the earth, she looked back, and beheld thee weeping over the lifeless clay, her surprise was extreme. "Why mourns my mother," said the seraph, "she seems to grieve for my happiness; ah! it cannot be! some cause unknown calls forth those tears." I said, she weeps thy death; she mourns the now faded form, that will no more return her fond caresses with infantine endearments; she weeps her infant flower cut off, ere time had expanded its leaves." "Ah! my mother!" she replied, "thou shouldst celebrate my release with songs of joy, like those with which the angels now welcome my soul! Helpless and grovelling I was upon earth, a sickly form, a senseless thing: now I roam unconfin'd in the immensity of space; with my new-born being my ideas are enlarged; my knowledge already exceeds the wisdom of the wisest on earth; ever praised be

the great Eternal Being, who created me capable of such bliss!"

"O Emeline! when in the ecstasy of our youthful passion we formed fairy visions of the future, were our views confined only to the perishable globe from which I have so happily escaped? Well thou knowest that the prospects of a blessed eternity gave a secret charm to our wishes. Often rambling through the well-known paths, the delights of religion were our theme: the time and place inspired the most sublime ideas. In the twilight of a summer even, we wandered forth in all the enthusiasm of virtuous love, and, fearless of intrusion, sat upon the bank where blossomed the hawthorn tree, and the sweet emblem of innocence, the lily of the valley, raised her humble head. The wish of our hearts checked by stern authority, we looked forward with rapture to the period, when our souls, roving

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through innumerable suns, our affection should continue unabated, through countless ages, approved by God and angels; and our first, early, matchless love, would burn with an holy flame.

“Yes, Emeline, here calm serenity dwells, and care and sorrow are unknown. Now, light and unconfined as air, I glide through those peaceful shades, where lovers, who, like me, were once unhappy, feel no more the corroding thorn of disappointment. Yet still remain the fond recollection of times past. I remember, while we were young and artless, with what exquisite delight I saw the rising blush, with what rapture I heard the melting sigh.

“The romantic design I had formed of amassing a fortune for thee, Emeline, in a far distant clime, was crowned with success.

On my passage home, the fatal tempest arose, which sunk the vessel, and I alone escaped. When I arrived at my much-loved paternal mansion, there I learned that Emeline was the wife of another ! you witnessed my despair on that fatal evening, and I resolved to die for you. Many were the brave who were laid low in the battle, where I also fell ; yet long the weapons of death flew harmless around me. I rushed where the fight was hottest. I called on thee, and a friendly ball pierced that faithful breast, which was full of love and Emeline ! The angel of battles received my soul, and mine earthly woes were exchanged for eternal glory.

“ Submit, O Emeline, to the decrees of fate. Fulfil the duties allotted thee, while yet thy soul animates its beauteous dwelling. The hour will arrive when we shall meet again,

and with thy babe and thy long-lost Polydore, thou wilt dwell for ever in the paradise of God."

Such, my friend, was the letter from the dead; but for the conviction it brought, I would have thought all that had passed but a dream. I now calmly reviewed the events of my life, and saw with confusion, that all the misfortunes which had assailed me, were the fruit of my own indiscretion, and to my rebellious heart I imputed my sorrows. I reflected with shame, that, had I followed my father's injunctions, and seen Polydore no more while my passion for him was yet in the bud, I would have escaped the rocks on which my peace was wrecked; but I had myself blasted my early happiness, and carried death and woe into a worthy family, who through me had lost the hope of their house,—an only son! The

early dawn of passion is easily overcome, and the conquest of it is often attended with much less trouble than the accomplishment of our desires, but when indulged it becomes a powerful foe.

I might also make some reflections on the conduct of those mistaken parents, who sacrifice the fondest wishes of their child, although the object beloved possesses every qualification but a handful of dross, or a few acres of land; but here filial duty imposes silence.

I now look forward with faith and hope, and, if yet a sigh of tender recollection heaves my heart, I remember that those souls so dear are happy. I bless the kind chastising rod, and bow with humble resignation to the will of the Most High.

Hail, RESIGNATION ! soul-inspiring power !

Whose gentle sway oft calms the troubled mind,
 While on the margin of life's stream reclin'd,
 And cheers the sorrows of each gliding hour.
 Thee I invoke, thy powerful aid implore,
 Sweet soother of each heart-corroding grief !
 Thy balmy influence softly yields relief,
 While care and all tumultuous passions reign no more.
 When thou appear'dst in angel's form y'clad,
 And with thee soothing Peace, sweet heavenly maid,
 At thy approach Despair, dire demon, fled,
 And true Religion's banner was displayed.
 When Death, fell tyrant ! with despotic sway,
 Has some much-lov'd relative lowly laid,
 Or bosom friend has levell'd with the clay,
 Then thou appear'st in heav'nly garb arrayed,
 To soothe the tearful, sorrowing, drooping heart,
 And reason and religion's aid impart ;
 Beguiling time with social converse sweet,
 Till all the soul's with peace and hope replete.
 Oft when the ills of life, a busy crowd,
 Sweep the rude surge of time's tempestuous sea ;
 When those repine, whom sorrow's glooms o'ercloud,
 Let pious RESIGNATION dwell with me.

Tho' every evil strew the devious way,
Sickness and sorrow rob us of repose,
Or Poverty impose her iron sway,
Thou, thou alone consolest all our woes !

LETTER IV.

FROM A LADY TO HER YOUNG FRIEND LATELY
MARRIED.

My dear young Friend,

I am at length fulfilling my promise to you, in paying the debt of friendship and affection, which my anxiety for your welfare also prompts me to do.

You are now, my dear, happy in the possession of your utmost wishes, and you ask me how you are to preserve these blessings. The question is of easy solution, though of the utmost importance to your future hap-

piness. You are blest in your husband's most tender love, but the continuance of that in a great measure depends on yourself; for the sweet harmony of sentiment, that union of soul which unites your hearts, must be preserved to secure his affection. Beauty is but a slender tie, and will soon cease to charm. Esteem is a more lasting bond, and the only one that can render your union indissoluble.

As all your happiness depends on the tenderness of your husband, the preservation of it is a care worthy your highest ambition. Your beauty and talents have captivated him, and to these you must still attend. Continue to dress and ornament your person, that he may still think you lovely, and others approve his choice. Do not consider it as a matter of no importance, in what attire you appear before him, but ac-

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custom yourself to such as will please him, and make you most agreeable in his eyes. Many ladies are no sooner married, than all attempts to please at home are laid aside, as if their aim was accomplished. If they dress it is only to see company, as if they would appear to all others lovely and amiable, to their husband alone disagreeable! Is it then surprising, if she who once appeared divinely charming to the admiring lover, should sink in his estimation, when she degrades herself from an angel to a slattern? A thousand nameless decouums must also be observed, which will give a grace to your most trivial actions. There is a heaven-born dignity in the conversation and deportment of a modest woman, which gains her the respect and adoration of every one.

You are naturally possessed of wit and

fine sense, and these also you must carefully cultivate: you must read books of useful knowledge, in order to retain a fund of judicious and entertaining conversation. This will render you a most valuable companion, and enliven your solitary hours. What happiness will your husband experience, by seeing you capable of filling up the serious, as well as the sprightly hours of life! What inexhaustible pleasure will he find in the society of a wife, whose charms will exist when youth and beauty are fled! When exhausted by the cares of business, or intercourse with the world, he will return home to a friend, who will receive him with the kindest looks and an open heart, to which he will confide his every care. Should any disagreeable occurrence disturb his soul, your affection will soothe his mind to peace, and charm away every uneasy thought.

Be careful never to appear before your husband ruffled by passion; if any of your servants have offended you, do not reprove them in his presence, but defer it to another opportunity. A man of delicacy is hurt by witnessing squabbles between his wife and her domestics. It is inattention to such seeming trifles, which frequently destroys the happiness of a wedded pair, by creating those disgusts which are attended by the most fatal consequences.

Should a difference of opinion arise between you, never contest the point but with perfect good humour, and if he persists in his own opinion, make a merit of at least appearing to submit; an angry look, or an unkind word, will always be painful, and cause distressing ideas; too much care, therefore, cannot be taken, to guard against the least breach in that mutual affection and confi-

dence, which ought ever to subsist, and is the chief bond of union, betwixt husband and wife.

You must not neglect still to cultivate those endowments which education has bestowed upon you, but by no means suffer them to interfere with your domestic concerns. Music, painting, and the modern languages, are elegant and pleasing accomplishments, and will not only agreeably occupy your leisure hours, but in company will give you an air of distinction, and qualify you to instruct your children; for who is so proper to teach them every thing useful and ornamental, as a mother?

If you are at any time asked to sing or play, never, by a piece of false prudery, refuse, but comply with cheerfulness. I was lately in company with a lady celebrated for

her accomplishments, who had been married only a few weeks; one of the party requested her to sing: "Sing!" she replied, "no, no! my singing days are over; I have something else to mind now than singing!" Nothing could be more ridiculous than such affectation.

If you are at an assembly, and are so circumstanced that you cannot avoid joining in a country dance, be particularly cautious with regard to your partner; but I am of opinion, that when a woman is married, her *dancing days* should be over. No man, I presume, can be pleased to see his wife, whom he fondly loves, handed about, and treated with a familiarity which should only be allowed to him whom she has vowed to "love, honour, and obey." The mother of a family, in particular, should never dance in public; such an exhibition being very

contrary to the dignity that ought to be preserved in the matronly character.

As the management of the household is entirely entrusted with you, pay a constant attention to the proper regulation of your family. Economy is highly commendable in every station of life, and you must not, by a silly pride, strive to keep pace with your more opulent neighbours, but let your expenditure be regulated by the amount of your income.

Behave always to your husband's relations and visitors with kindness and affability; this he will consider a mark of attention to himself. Let your female friends be such as reason approves; persons of an excellent understanding, and enemies to slander and defamation.—the blackest, yet the most fashionable of all vices.

A warm regard, my dear young friend, for your happiness in life, has induced me to give you a few advices, founded on experience, to which, if you attend, you will most assuredly participate in all the happiness which the cosmopolitan state is capable of affording. That the Giver of all goodness may bestow on you every blessing!—is the fervent prayer of

Your sincere friend,

LETTER V.

FROM A MOTHER TO HER SON.

My dear Henry,

Several weeks are now elapsed since you were united to your amiable Felicia. It gives me pleasure to know that your conjugal partner is distinguished by the agreeable appellation of a domestic female, who prefers the peaceful delights of home, and the promotion of her husband's felicity, to all the fluttering scenes of gaiety abroad.

Marriage is doubtless productive of the greatest happiness we can enjoy in this transitory state, but fatal experience proves that it

is often attended with the utmost misery, which is entirely owing to the imprudence of the parties themselves.

The man who meets, in the object of his affections, the agreeable companion, the tender friend, the soother of his cares and partner of his joys, must (unless he wilfully destroy his domestic peace by irregular conduct or a peevish temper,) be raised to the highest pitch of human felicity. · Never let passion triumph over reason, as it may be attended with consequences which may cause you the deepest regret, by destroying your domestic happiness. It is impossible that the fervour of love can continue, when a woman sees her husband frequently out of temper, or violently angry at every trivial occurrence; you must then guard against this foible. A man of sense will ever be kind and affectionate to the object of his love; he will value and esteem her above all

the world; he will delight in her conversation, and ever treat her with esteem and respect. Let the authority of the husband always be tempered with the tenderness of the lover. Thus will you experience the felicity that flows from an union of souls, and your only strife will be, who will most contribute to the happiness of the other.

Your Felicia, my dear son, is of a religious disposition; you must, by your example, confirm her in the practice of piety, and secure to both of you, that peace and tranquillity of soul which cannot otherwise be acquired. Join then with her, my dear Henry, in thanking the Supreme Ruler of the universe for all the blessings you have received, and invoke his protection and assistance in your course through life. Do not consider it sufficient to be seen regularly at public worship, or to be faithful and just towards all men: it is a duty required of Chris-

tians, that a portion of each day be set aside to address the Omnipotent. When a person thus keeps up a communion with his God, he feels a cheerfulness and serenity of mind, in the conviction that he has a faithful Friend and Mediator in our blessed Redeemer, who pities the frailty of man.

That these admonitions, my dear Henry, may have the desired effect, is the sincere and ardent wish of

Your affectionate Mother.

LETTER VI.

FROM A LADY TO HER FRIEND.

My dear Amelia,

Although many and various are the degrees of misery which we are here doomed to endure, if we look around, and compare our lot with that of others, we shall find many causes of thankfulness to the Omnipotent, and sources of consolation. How often do we behold those who are objects of envy to many, discontented at the fate assigned them? The great man wishes for increase of power, the rich importunes Heaven to grant him more wealth: the soldier thirsts for glory, or, in other words, that the world may know and relate how often his sword has been imbrued in the blood of his

fellow-creatures ; but how few do we find emulous to out-do others in moral rectitude, and obeying the commands of the Most High ! The incident I am going to relate will illustrate this assertion. To your feeling heart I address my simple story ; the gay and unthinking may laugh to scorn the sorrows of an obscure family, and unfeeling arrogance may scoff at the distresses of the lowly, but while the Priest and the Levite condemn the errors of suffering humanity, the good Samaritan will give a tear to its woes.

Being some time since on a visit to a friend, near the village of ——, a few miles from the metropolis, a villager came in one morning, with the intelligence that an elderly woman had been taken ill near the road that led to our dwelling. My friend, with that humanity natural to her, made her be carried into the house : she had fainted from fatigue and absti-

nence ; her appearance was decent and prepossessing, and a few grey locks appeared on her cheek, where sorrow had committed those ravages that time might yet have delayed. Her fit was long, and when, by care and the application of some restoratives, she was in some degree recovered, the most dreadful convulsions agonized her frame. Sometime she continued in this state, alternately fainting and convulsed, but by unremitting care, her recollection was at length restored, and a flood of tears relieved her oppressed heart. "Oh, ladies !" she cried, looking up, "had not Heaven thrown me in your way, I must have died. For these two days I have ate nothing. I came yesterday morning from K—— in Fifeshire ; I had no money with me, and only some bread and cheese in my pocket, thinking I would see my daughter whenever I arrived ; but meeting a poor little boy on the road who was crying for hunger, I gave it to him. "Poor thing," said

I, "you are more in want than I am." But when I came to Edinburgh I did not see my Fanny! Oh! she has broken the heart of her poor old mother!" Here the poor creature's agitation and distress became so violent that we feared a relapse. But after some time she recovered and resumed, "And so I was going on to the town of D — to see if I could find an only brother who lives there; but as I had tasted nothing I grew faint by the way, and could not proceed. A cart happening to come up, the owner took me in, but after going a little way, I grew worse, and as a sick person was burdensome to him, he set me down by the road side, and went on. Here I thought I was going to die, and prayed to the Lord for assistance, and he heard me, for some of your family came out and brought me to this house, for I had no food, having given all I had to the poor hungry boy." "And that action," said I, "will procure you a recompence far beyond

the most sumptuous banquet. Do not despair, good woman; cast yourself on Him who is mighty to save, and though your misfortunes are great, He will support you under them. Remember that "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb." "Oh!" she replied, "when my poor husband died, a fortnight since, I wished that the green turf had covered us both. I regretted that he had been so soon taken from me; but now I thank God that he did not live to see this day, and, oh! that I had not seen it!" Here a fresh flood of tears interrupted her, and some time elapsed ere she could give a succinct account of her history; at length she began thus:

"My husband was a labourer in K——, we were married thirty years since, and had seven children, but only the two youngest survived, a boy and my poor lost Fanny. We were poor, but were enabled, by industry and

economy, to give our children a good plain education, such as reading and writing, for my poor James always said he would give them a good education, if we should want for many things ourselves; 'and that,' said he, 'will help them through the world.' It was our greatest wish to bring them up in the fear of the Lord. So our children grew up, and all the neighbours praised them, and said they were the prettiest and best conditioned children in the parish. My husband wished Charles to follow his own occupation, but he wanted to go to sea, and as nothing else would satisfy him, we were obliged to consent, though it broke my heart to part with him, for my mind misgave me sadly that I would never see him again. So he left us; and now all our comfort was centered in Fanny, and though I say it, she was as pretty a lassie as could be seen, and she was good, for she never gave us a sore heart.

There was a young man in the neighbourhood, who had loved my Fanny from his infancy ; he was about her own age, and the pride of his old parents, as Fanny was of hers. They lived next door to us, and being often together, the young folk contracted a liking for each other, and we agreed that they should be married in a few years. But at this time the father of William died, and left him the only support of his mother, who was old and infirm. He was too good a son to neglect his poor parent, and as Fanny and he were too young and too poor to marry, we agreed that she should go to Edinburgh in search of a place. "Perhaps," said she, "I may save a few pounds, which will be a great help to William, and I will come home again, and we will all be happy together." Poor thing ! the smile was on her lips, though her eyes were filled with tears. William saw her into the vessel, for he could not leave his old mother, or he

would have gone with her to Edinburgh ; they gave each other a lock of hair at parting, for they had nothing better to give, but it was of more value to them than gold.

"So when Fanny was gone, I thought I should have died, but I tried to look cheerful before my poor James, for his health was beginning to decline, and grief would have wasted him entirely ; but the blow was very soon struck that sunk him to the grave.

"My Charles had always sent us what he could spare of his pay, and with that and my own spinning, for James was too weak to earn much, we were very comfortable ; but one morning a letter came from one of his mess-mates ; informing us, that the ship had been engaged in an action, and my boy was among the killed ! My husband after that was never seen to smile, but grew weaker and weaker.

William came every day to see him, and when the sun shone, we drew him to the door in an elbow chair, and there he sat, with his Bible on a little table before him, for he could take no pleasure in any thing but reading the scriptures. He wanted for nothing, for the neighbours were very kind to us, and William did the work of two men to be able to do something for us, but all would not do, for one day he said to William and I, he would try to sleep, and, said he, "I feel the time approaching when I shall sleep in Jesus, to awake (I trust) in glory. My boy has gone before me, and I hope we will all meet together, when the Lord's time cometh. I will not see Fanny again in this world, but I know, William, you will be a good husband and make her happy, so I am easy on that score. Be sure to give her my blessing. God bless you, my dear Betty," he added, taking my hand, "you have been a faithful and a loving wife to me, the

Lord will reward you, for I never can!" So he fell asleep, and it was his last, for he never spoke nor moved again! And to be sure I was not in my senses, but William took the care of the funeral, and when all the expences were paid, I had nothing left, but a few articles of furniture; but William said, "keep yourself easy, my dear mother, (for he always called me mother) you will live with Fanny and me, and we will have two mothers, and be all as happy as the day is long." But for some weeks I had not heard from Fanny, though I had written her to come and see her father. We had one letter from her after she went to Edinburgh, in which she told us, that my cousin, whom we had expected to find a place for her, had left town, and she was obliged, with the little money she had, to take a small lodgning with a widow woman till a place was found. So one evening she was in a shop enquiring about a place, when a fine gentleman came in, and

looking at Fanny, he inquired and was informed of her errand. "Ah! my good girl," said he, "this is a sad wicked town, and good places are not to be had without great difficulty; but as you seem a decent girl, I will speak to my mother who wants a young person about your age to wait upon her. She lives in the country, but will be at my house to-morrow about this time, and if you will meet her there, I make no doubt you will agree, if you have brought a proper character along with you." So my dear child was all joy and gratitude, he seemed so good and obliging. Well, at the hour appointed Fanny goes to his house, according to the address he had given her, and was shewn, by a decent looking woman, into a handsome room, where the gentleman soon appeared, and after some questions, said, his mother had written that she could not come to town till the following day. "But my girl," says he, "be sure to call to-morrow at this hour,

and you will see her ; do not engage yourself elsewhere, for she wants a virtuous, modest girl, as you seem to be ! ” So he gave her a piece of money, and she went away. The next evening she returned, and was shewn into the same room, where she remained a long time before any one appeared ; at last the gentleman entered, and, after expressing his regret, said, that his mother had been in town, and had returned home, desiring him to engage her, and that she would return in a few days, and take her along with her. “ In the meantime, Fanny,” said he, “ as you will have little money with you, you can stay with my housekeeper till that time ; she is a good motherly woman, and will be very kind to you. It is also necessary that you should know my mother’s humours, and what kind of employment you will be put to, and nobody is so well qualified to inform you of these particulars.” The rest of the letter was filled with remembrances to us all,

and particulary to William. He, however, could not overcome his anxiety about her, nor did he seem over-pleased with the attention the gentleman had paid to Fanny; however, the remembrance of their long attachment, made him at length tolerably easy. From this time we heard of her no more, and after the funeral I resolved to go to Edinburgh myself and see her. I set out early in the morning without saying to any one where I was going, for I knew that William would make a point of accompanying me. When I came to town, I went, as I have already mentioned, to the house of the gentleman who had engaged my daughter, and there,—I thought my heart would have burst!—they told me I would find her in the lodgings he had taken for her!—They either could not, or would not give me any further information, but shut the door in my face, and left me to go away distracted. So, without eating or drinking, I came this

length when your charity saved my life. I will get my brother to search for my poor Fanny ; and for the wretch who, under the mask of kindness, has wrought her ruin, may the Almighty forgive him, and send him repentance ere it be too late !”

Here this victim of misfortune ended her melancholy story, the recital of which had often drawn forth tears of sympathy. We remained sometime silent, overcome with the most poignant sensations ; “ Can such things be ? ” said I to myself, “ exists there such depravity in the human race ? ” I looked on the venerable and woe-worn figure before me, and her appearance plainly said, *such things are.*

We detained the poor woman the remainder of the day, and next morning sent her in the fly to D——, desiring her to call in the way back, and promising to assist her search. She

returned in a few days: her brother had endeavoured to discover the retreat of the poor lost one, but without success. We enquired the name of the seducer, and discovered him to be a well known and respected character in the metropolis. One who is received into what is called the best company, and whose notice never fails to excite the triumph of vanity in the female sex, while the humble victim of his villainy, unpitied and unknown, is torn from her home, her friends, and faithful lover:—from the hope of domestic peace and virtuous love,—like a floweret, plucked from its native soil, which, blighted, sheds its leaves and dies.

After many inquiries, and a tedious search, (through which, perhaps, you may not be inclined to accompany us) we discovered Fanny, or rather the shadow of that once blooming fair one, in an obscure lodging in the Canongate, pale, emaciated, and death-like, so

short is the passage from vice to misery. Abhorring herself and her seducer, she fled from him, and sought refuge in that humble retreat, where remorse and anguish preyed on her vitals, and brought her to the verge of the tomb. The meeting between the mother and daughter was affecting in the extreme. The poor victim hid her face in the bosom of her parent, while their mutual sighs alone were heard. The latter was the first to recover some degree of composure, which she exerted in endeavouring to comfort her fallen child; but the attempt was vain. "Oh, mother!" she feebly uttered, "do not seek to bring me back to the world; I have lost all that could make life desirable, and my only hope is, that death will soon destroy this wretched, guilty being:—be comforted, you will still have a son." Here her voice faltered, and it was some time ere she could proceed. "I know," she resumed, "that he will love you as his own mother, and

be kind to you for my sake. I would not, unless concealment is impossible, let him know my sad story; I will soon be out of the reach of reproaches, and I could not bear the sorrowful looks of my dear William. Tell him that my heart was always his;—that I have been deceived and betrayed, but that my mind was pure." Here she fell back exhausted on her pillow.

The ravages of sickness made rapid progress on the wasted frame of this unhappy young woman, who, it may be supposed, had filled up the measure of her woes; but the last fatal stroke awaited her, which was to complete and put a period to her calamities. Her long-loved and faithful William had come to Edinburgh, impatient to behold his beloved Fanny, and little expecting the fatal intelligence which awaited him. The death of a relation had put him in possession of a neat farm, properly stocked,

and in good order, which he was impatient to share with her who was destined never to be his. He soon discovered the abode of the unfortunates, and anticipating a joyful surprise, resolved to be himself the herald of his arrival. He accordingly enquired for the mother of his Fanny, who, on entering the apartment where he stood, was so overcome with grief that she could not immediately speak to him. Imagining her emotion to proceed from the recollection of her husband, recalled by his presence, he endeavoured to console her, and to impart to her a portion of the joy and hope that animated himself. "My dear mother," said he, "our misfortunes are at an end. I am now rich, and am come to take you and Fanny home with me, for I can no longer exist without her; Where is she? Let me see her!" The little room where Fanny lay, was separated from them only by a thin partition, and the eagerness of her lover reached her ears. She start-

ed up and listened, while the good landlady supported her in her arms. Convinced, at length, that it was indeed his voice, she faintly uttered “William!” The well-known sound caught the attention of her lover, who rushed into the room with joyful impatience, but stood transfixed on beholding the scarce breathing spectre of his adored and once blooming Fanny. Pale as herself, and scarcely more alive, he remained the image of despair. The wretched Fanny, stretching out her arms towards him, faintly articulated, “Forgive, forgive!” These words conveyed to the unhappy young man all the horror of his destiny; he precipitated himself towards her, and falling on his knees, with a half-stifled groan, hid his face in the bed-clothes. “Oh, William!” said she, “I am not worthy of regret;—but I am forgiven in heaven—I feel that I am! Will not you also forgive me?” Her unhappy lover raised his eyes and hands to heaven, then

clasped her to his breast, with the frenzy of despair, thereby emphatically expressing that forgiveness to which grief denied utterance.—A faint glow suffused the cheek of his Fanny, and died away.—She laid her head on his bosom ;—her dim eye once more looked piteous on him,—then closed for ever.

LETTER VII.

TO JULIA, FROM A FEMALE FRIEND.

My dear Julia,

In the last conversation we had together, we remarked the wonderful and protecting care of Providence over the meanest of the creatures; that the eye of Omnipotence beholds with more complacency, the humble cottager, whose simple orisons ascend in singleness of heart to His Almighty throne, than the lordly inhabitant of the palace, who views with disdain his lowly brethren of the dust. The same Great Parent created alike the king and the beggar; He is the common Father of all, and watches over those who trust in Him with humble faith. The incident which I am going to relate gave rise to these reflections.

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Last Sunday evening, I accompanied my much valued friend, Miss D——, in a walk through the fields. A slight shower coming on, we took shelter in a cottage at the gate leading to a superb mansion. The only inhabitant of this humble dwelling was an aged woman, who welcomed us to her hut with the cordiality of an honest heart. We soon entered into a familiar conversation, and our hostess gave us a short history of her life. It had been truly a chequered one, but her hope in her Creator never abandoned her. For many years her existence had been embittered by a constant series of misfortunes. Left a widow early in life, with four children unprovided for, with much difficulty could she by hard labour procure them a scanty subsistence. Fate does not always smile upon industry, and they were often in want of necessary food. Once when all her endeavours to get employment had been in vain, and this unhappy family had for

some time felt all the hardships of approaching famine; when their last morsel was exhausted, assailed by the pangs of hunger, they cried unto the Lord, (to use the poor woman's expression,) and he heard them. They had tasted no food that day, nor had any prospect of a supply, but were standing with meek resignation at the cottage door, when a cart loaded with full sacks appeared. Just opposite the door, one of the sacks burst, and a quantity of roots rolled out. "Take them up, Goody," said the owner, "I have not time to stay for them." "Now, mother," said the eldest boy, "never let us despair, but trust in God, who has opened the sack and poured out provisions at our feet."

She proceeded to relate, that after her children had left her, to provide for themselves, she had been discovered by Lady ——, who had given her the cottage she at present

possessed, and a small annuity for taking charge of the poultry. "And here," said she, "I am lonely to be sure, but I am happy, for I have the company of God. Had I more society, my mind, perhaps, might be too much attached to this world; but, as I am, I have leisure to think of a better, and prepare myself for it, so that what to some would seem a hardship, I look upon as the greatest blessing that could befall me, in that the Lord hath withdrawn me from the world, to bring me nearer to himself."

Here I could not help mentally ejaculating, I thank thee, O my God! that thou hast conveyed to me instruction by this untutored child of nature. Grant that I may always rely upon thee, and then no misfortune will seem hard unto me, no worldly evil stagger my faith in thy mercy!

LETTER VIII.

FROM A YOUNG LADY TO HER FEMALE FRIEND.

You, my beloved friend, have shared in all my pleasures; you know how bright were my early hopes, when fortune, love, and every earthly blessing, smiled around me; but, alas! the pleasing dream is fled, all is now darkness and woe! Edmund, on whom my youthful heart had rested all its hopes of happiness,--Edmund is become the prey of death! But lately he was strong as the tree of the vale, now he is fallen to rise no more!

You, who knew not my Edmund, know not the loss I have sustained! You are yet igno-

rant of the terrible rent that is made in the heart, when youth, virtue and manly beauty, are consigned to the silent tomb. I sit wonder-struck in my apartment, and it almost seems my grave. In every breeze I hear my Edmund's voice, in every shadow his form flits before me ! I speak to him, and listen for his reply, but soon I feel that I am wretched and alone !

How tremendous and awful must be the final transition, when the soul issues from the tenement which she has so long inhabited ! How gladly would we know in what manner she wings her way to yonder invisible regions ! What unknown worlds are discovered to her view, when she passes, quick as thought, through unbounded space ! Oh, could we know how she is affected by the remembrance of those left behind ! but, alas ! how vain is the wish !

**A veil is drawn over the scene, and experience
only will disclose the secret.**

———no notices they give,
Nor tell us where nor how they live,
Though conscious, while with us below,
How much themselves desired to know.

As if bound up by solemn fate,
To keep this secret of their state ;
To tell their joys or pains to none,
That man might live by FAITH alone.

O Death ! thou cruel spoiler ! many are the miserable thou hast made ! The brave, the wise, the innocent, the good, all are alike thy prey ! And will these then repose for ever in the earth's cold bosom ? Ah, no ! I feel some welcome consolations. My Edmund's life was virtuous, in God he put his trust ; let me, by

the remembrance of his example, bow with humble resignation, and presume not to question the ways of the Eternal.

I will fly from the bustle of the world, to commune with the dead. I will enjoy, at my Edmund's grave, the sad delight of the pensive sigh, the holy satisfaction of the pious tear. In those moments I experience the only consolation of which I am capable. I think my Edmund is only gone before me, to a land where I shall soon again behold him. Adieu, my beloved friend, I shall conclude with a few lines written at my Edmund's grave.

Behold, where stealing o'er the midnight tomb,
 Pale Cynthia sheds around her silver light,
 And bids the solitary mourner come
 To weep on Edmund's grave the lonely night.

"Here lies," the goddess said, "my darling son,
Beneath this turf-clad stone be now his bane;
Fallen is the bane, and gone the tuneful tongue,
Since my lov'd Edmund's numbered with the dead!"

"No more shall echo wild resound my praise,
No more at eve the trembling strain prolong;
No more the rustic throng repeat his lays,
Or listen to my Edmund's plaintive song.

"What tho' no proud memorials of his worth,
No 'glowing statues' (vain mementos) rise
In mournful state, to deck his bed of earth,
It is enough to say, "Here Edmund lies!"

"Yet still at eve shall hovering angels tend
This hallowed spot, and watch with tender care
His sacred dust, and pitying cherubs bend
To guard the beauteous clay that moulders there.

"And weeping virgins still shall strew thy grave,
With earliest flow'rets deck the clay-cold bed;
And gentle gales the mournful cypress wave,
In hollow murmurs o'er thy youthful head!

“ And Cynthia, beaming on thy lonely tomb,
Shall pay the last, the mournful tribute due,
To one cut off in manhood's brightest bloom,
Nor ever bid thy grave a long adieu!”

LETTER IX.

FROM A GENTLEMAN TO HIS FRIEND.

My dear Charles,

By the death of my father I have lately become possessed of wealth sufficient to procure all the comforts, and some of the luxuries of life. Being, as you know, of a retired domestic disposition, it was my wish to find a conjugal partner, sensible and accomplished, whose congenial habits would solace and enliven my future days. As I had heard much of the superior attractions of the ladies of ——, I directed my course to that quarter, not doubting that there my pursuit would be crowned with success.

Upon my arrival, I was introduced to many of the gay, the young and the beautiful, and thought report had not deceived me in extolling the graces and high accomplishments of those females. Desirous of gaining their favour, I attended them to public places, and endeavoured to engage them in rational conversation,—but here I failed. A new fashion, criticisms on each other, and remarks on that class of creatures denominated *beaux*, comprised the sum-total of their observations. As I had never before associated with any ladies but the daughters of our country neighbours, I found myself in nowise qualified to converse with the fair sex of ———, and was greatly surprised to find myself looked upon as an ignorant country booby, whose conversation and manners entirely disqualifed him for genteel society. I resolved, however, to continue my search, thinking that I might yet meet with one whom I could entertain by

disquisitions on some favourite author, or remarks on the beauties of nature, &c. &c. without being under the necessity of extolling her charms, or depreciating those of some rival toast.

After a short period, I thought I had at length discovered the object of my search, in Lydia, a young lady of infinite grace and accomplishments, retired in her habits, un-knowing and almost unknown. As she apparently possessed every requisite for an excellent domestic wife, I solicited and obtained her consent, and that of her family, to my addresses. On the morning appointed for the ceremony, Lydia was nowhere to be found, and it was afterwards discovered that she had eloped with a young fellow, who was introduced to her only a few days before, and who had no recommendation, but a tolerable share of effrontery, and a scarlet coat. At first

I felt my disappointment severely, but was soon consoled by the reflection, that a woman so capricious would by no means have made an eligible wife.

The next who engaged my attention was Sylvia, a female admired by all. She was distinguished by the peculiar beauty of her features, and symmetry of her form; her liveliness and gaiety were accompanied with such enchanting grace, that I conceived I had now met the paragon of her sex. With these sentiments, it will not seem surprising if I at first attributed to goodness of heart, her endeavours to palliate and excuse the faults and dissipation of several young men who frequented her tea-table. At this time a gentleman of Sylvia's acquaintance was much talked of for an affair of a very atrocious nature, that drew upon him the censure of most people; yet, to my surprise he was not only received by her as

usual, but treated with an easy familiarity, as if his conduct had been perfectly blameless. Strange ! thought I, can those who pass their time in dissipation and irregularity, be admitted into the society of virtuous and *modest* women ? I took an opportunity to express my sentiments on the subject to Sylvia, who only replied, that “ Mr. ——— had no doubt been imprudent.”—“ Imprudent !” said I, “ can a conduct so flagitious be called by a name so gentle ! I would have imagined, that every lady would banish from her society those men whose dissolute morals render them dangerous and disreputable companions.” “ Oh ! ” she replied, “ in men of fashion a few irregularities may be forgiven.” If so, thought I, the woman who approves and countenances vice, can never be a proper partner for life. I took leave of Sylvia, and resolved to choose a very different companion.

I was next engaged by the attractions of Juliana, a young lady possessed of every grace that can adorn the sex. Her beauty surpassed that of most of her companions, but was soon overlooked in the charms of her conversation, and justness of her remarks. I was enraptured with her accomplishments, and concluded that here my pursuit would end. One evening I was at her house, when a gentleman present mentioned a certain young lady in the highest terms of applause. The countenance of Juliana instantly fell, and she replied by some satirical remarks on the person who was the subject of conversation. At this moment the lady in question entered the room. Her appearance immediately prepossessed every one in her favour, and the purity of her heart was conspicuous in her countenance. I observed that Juliana witnessed, with visible uneasiness, every mark of approbation bestowed on her guest; and I reflected with astonishment on the

trifling caprice and silly vanity, that obscured a mind capable of attaining the highest degree of human perfection. I concluded by a determination never to address a woman who could not hear without pain the applause justly bestowed upon another. I marked with attention the innocence and unassuming modesty of the young lady who was the object of so much envy; and entering into conversation with her, was convinced that I had now discovered a kindred mind.

I took an opportunity to ask some questions concerning her, at the gentleman whose observations in her favour had discovered to me the true disposition of Juliana, and the result of my enquiries was suited to my most sanguine wishes. He acquainted me, that she had been educated in the strictest principles of piety and virtue, by her mother, a widow lady of small fortune, but distinguished by her

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intellectual endowments and exemplary conduct. "Octavia," said he, "so is my young favourite named, is truly religious, and her sweetness of temper is invariable. Possessing the best of hearts, she rises superior to the foibles which are too frequently observed in many of the female sex: she has no inclination for frivolous amusements, but passes her time in domestic tranquillity and useful occupations."

A further acquaintance with the amiable Octavia, convinced me, that in her I had fully discovered the object of my search, and I am now happy in the possession of a wife, whose amiable dispositions render me fully blest. As her mind is occupied by important duties, and useful pursuits, she has no inclination to countenance or palliate vice, because it is fashionable; and as our friends are persons eminent for their virtues, in her

peaceful breast the baneful vice of envy will never find entrance, Her views are elevated above present and external objects; and while she fulfils the several duties allotted her on earth, she neglects not to prepare for a future state.

THE END.

N O T E S.

LETTER VI.

The leading circumstances of this simple story are literally true. The writer was residing with a friend near the metropolis, when the poor woman related her history to them: the style, and language of the Narrator, are, as much as possible, preserved. It was formerly published in *A selection of Tales.*

LETTER VII.



The anecdote which forms the subject of this Letter, is strictly true. The writer having been much struck with the unpretending piety, and humble faith of the individual it concerns, wrote it down immediately on returning home; and it is now made public, in the idea, that it may not be unacceptable to those who, like the poor cottager, put their firm trust in the Almighty. It were to be wished, that all who suffer the scourge of adversity, would imitate her example, and bow with humble resignation to the decrees of Omnipotence, assured that *all things work together for good to them that love God.*

J. Neilson, printer.

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